INTERVIEW
LAUREN COHAN

TO CATCH A THIEF

As the beautiful but corrupt Bela, LAUREN COHAN is causing the Winchester brothers no end of trouble during *Supernatural*'s third season. In an exclusive interview with *The Official Supernatural Magazine*, the Philadelphia-born actress reveals what makes this cunning thief tick, as well as sharing some hilarious on-set anecdotes.

It's a long way, both geographically and artistically, from the Edinburgh Fringe Festival to *Supernatural* on The CW. But Lauren Cohan, whose character Bela has brought a freshly amoral spice to the show's third season, is used to long distances. Born in Philadelphia, she spent part of her childhood in New Jersey before moving to England, where she lived until relocating to Los Angeles last year. A graduate of England's University of Winchester, Cohan first started to take career matters into her own hands when she co-founded a theater company on campus.

"We were creating flyers for our first play, and we spent about three days trying to come up with a name," Cohan recalls. "Then we just gave up and called it 2G4T." Asked what that might stand for, she just laughs.

The company's first play was a gender-bending reimagining of George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. "We made Eliza Doolittle a man and Henry Higgins a woman," Cohan explains. "We did really well at university with it, and so we took that play to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival for the summer."

Edinburgh turned out to be a great place for a young actor to hone her chops. "It's one of

Words: Alex Irvine

"RUBY AND BELA AREN'T JUST ARM CANDY FOR THE BOYS."

my favorite places," Cohan says, "and we had a dreamy summer. We played all day, and then we'd go home and improv. It was the most amazing time."

Alas, touring theater is no way to make money. "We won awards and did really well, and still came home with absolutely nothing at the end of the summer," Cohan admits. "Then we moved to London, where we started publicizing the show and planning an adaptation of Pamela Hall's children's book *Elemenopee*. And then I got a film. So that's the long and short of the theater company days."

That film came about as a result of Cohan's previous modeling experience. "I used to do modeling when I was very young," she says, "and I was still friends with the woman who runs the agency. I went to meet with them and they said, 'Why don't we start sending you out for some auditions and see what happens?' And I thought, okay, that will be fun for a little while, but then I was planning to go to drama school... which is the last thing an agent wants to hear, that you're up for auditions but will be taking off in a couple of months." She laughs. "But I didn't know that at the time. You don't know anything until you start going through it."

Within a month of hitting the audition circuit, Cohan landed her first feature, *Young Alexander The Great*. "I went off to Egypt for a month, learned archery, and met some of my greatest friends," she recalls. "And then I got another feature after that, and went to do *Casanova* in Venice!"

It seemed like things were really taking off, but like most actors' careers, Cohan's wasn't without its hiccups. After *Casanova*, she recalls, "I had a year when nothing happened. It probably wasn't helped by the fact that I was going back and forth between L.A. and London. In the meantime, I got offered a couple of terrible horror films, which I refused."

TRIVA
Lauren Cohan graduated with a BA in English and Drama from Winchester University, UK. No, really!

Another offer wasn't so easy to refuse: to play the role of an American roommate for BBC institution *Basil Brush*, a show about a wisecracking puppet fox. "I really wanted to do it, but my agent didn't want me to. The part was an American girl who moves into his apartment and he develops a crush on her." In a kids' show?

"*Basil Brush* is one of those shows that works for kids and also on a much more adult level. This fox is the most naughty character," she says with a laugh. "But I didn't end up doing that, and then I moved to L.A., figuring that if I wanted to do films, I should be in the place where they're all made."

LA STORY

Not too long after her arrival in L.A., Cohan met casting director Robert Ulrich and casting associate Hannah Cooper for a project that didn't happen. "I'd developed a good relationship with them, though," she says, "and went back to read for Bela in July, and then I came back and met Robert again." This time Eric Kripke was there, too.

"I didn't know that Eric was the creator," Cohan says. "I thought he was another producer, so I wasn't nervous. They had me read Bela with and without the accent, and they seemed very excited. It felt very good, which is always the kiss of death."

Except this time. Cohan called her manager and found out that she'd already been called back in for a screen test.

"Eric came in – by this time I knew who he was – and said, 'Don't worry, you go in there and you rule that room,'" she recalls. "It went well, and I went back in for the network that afternoon, and I wasn't nervous by that point."

After all the auditions and tests, Cohan found out that she'd gotten the role… but the character wasn't certain to be added to the show. "So I was at my waitressing gig for eight days waiting for it to happen," she says. When the wait was over, and she had the job, she recalls telling anyone who would listen, with predictable results: "People gave me quite a lot of business cards."

Fans of the show were initially less-than-thrilled with the news that two women were going to be added as recurring characters. Rumors flew that Bela and Ruby were going to be arm candy or sidekicks, and the grumbling got pretty intense… until, of course, fans started watching season three and found out exactly what Bela and Ruby were all about.

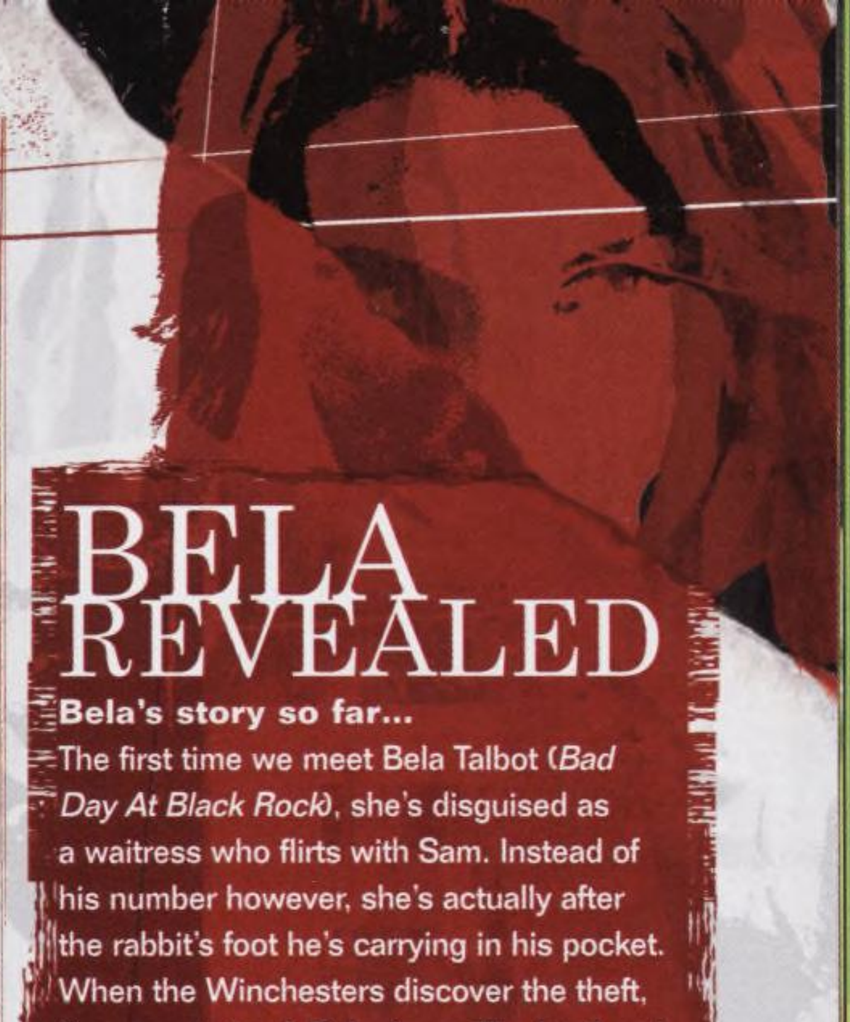
"I think it's pretty funny that there's been so much blogging and chat among fans about Ruby and Bela," Cohan says. "They're such different characters. First of all, they're not arm candy for the boys, and secondly, they're not in competition with each other or with Sam and Dean, because they're in different areas of the supernatural world. Ruby is a badass butt-kicking kind of girl, and Bela's not. She's wicked with words, but she's not doing any kind of Kung Fu."

Although, Cohan allows, she might have her own rituals. "Maybe Tai Chi? You've got to be centered to do high-class occult thievery."

A little centering might also help when you're dealing with Bela's traumatic family history, which we begin to discover in *Red Sky At Morning*. Cohan doesn't know all the details, but hints that more will be disclosed in the second half of season three.

"She's definitely not right. I didn't realize how much of a problem she is. She's really just out for herself, and I think she finds the boys' goodness sweet but naïve and kind of silly. She doesn't understand why they work how they do, and it doesn't stop her from doing the things she has to.

"She's really damaged," Cohan continues. "I actually don't want to know her backstory yet. Eric asked me, and I didn't want him to tell me." She plans to let the reveal happen to her as the episodes are shot, in much the same way that viewers of the show will experience it.



BELA REVEALED

Bela's story so far…

The first time we meet Bela Talbot (*Bad Day At Black Rock*), she's disguised as a waitress who flirts with Sam. Instead of his number however, she's actually after the rabbit's foot he's carrying in his pocket. When the Winchesters discover the theft, they vow to track Bela down. The brothers' search takes them to Queens, New York, where the brunette has an apartment, paid for with the money she earns selling rare occult objects. Dean steals the rabbit's foot back, leading Bela to shoot Sam in a graveyard in a bid to secure her $1.5 million payday. But Dean tricks her (again), and she curses herself by grabbing the foot. Now if she sells it, she'll have bad luck too, so Bela and the boys burn the foot together.

The next time we see Bela she's up to her old tricks, this time pretending to collude with Sam and Dean in order to get her hands on the haunted remains of a dead sailor (*Red Sky At Morning*). During this episode, we learn that Bela killed a member of her own family, although she refuses to go into details. Then, in *Dream A Little Dream*, Bela once again pulls a fast one on the brothers by stealing – wait for it – the Colt, but not before Sam has a particularly lustful dream about her.

It's an interesting way to inhabit a character, and one that Cohan wouldn't be able to do without the serial nature of a TV show. And there are other aspects of TV that she finds affect the way she works. "Coming from feature work, TV is a learning process for me," she says, "largely because of the time constraints. You have a set schedule, and you really have to power through and do the best work you can in the time frame alloted. I really like it, with the different directors and actors coming in, but it's also a little more difficult because you're getting to know different people all the time."

The pressure could be a recipe for disaster, but Cohan says the *Supernatural* set is "like a family. Maybe everybody thinks that about the show they work on, but it's true here. Everyone on the crew is so good at their job, so professional. It's been going for more than two years, and almost everyone has been there from the beginning. It's very carefully thought out and put together," which means that crises come and go quickly because everyone pulls together to deal with them.

"And those boys," she says of Jared and Jensen, "they crack me up. I'm laughing all the time."

Warming to the topic, she tells a story of a recent on-set prank.

"We were shooting in the Winchester safe house [in *Red Sky At Morning*]," Cohen recounts. It's a tense scene, with a maritime menace and no clear path to figuring out what the malevolent force is or how to fight it. The safe house is decrepit and dingy, "and to make it look suitably distressed they have rubbish everywhere," Cohan goes on... including a bunch of mousetraps. "Well, Jared is like a two-year-old. He keeps picking up the mousetraps and throwing them at people, and then he snapped one on his own finger!"

For a moment, she's laughing so hard she can hardly tell the story. "Comeuppance," she chuckles. "To the nth degree."

LAUGHS GALORE

Even when the boys aren't playing their prankster roles, there's plenty of on-set humor. "That same scene in the safe house, there's a moment when I'm sitting and I stand up to say something and then I have to turn around and walk away," Cohan says. Off-camera, a crew member moves her chair out of the way so she doesn't have to worry about it when she turns to go.

"They reminded me not to sit down," she recounts, but then she didn't like the take, and was so focused on the scene that she wanted to go again right away. "I stand up, say 'You can't just leave me here,' and then I wanted to do it again, and I'm sitting, and I realize that it's already too late, and all of us are looking at each other knowing that there's nothing we can do about it. And it was made all the funnier because it was such an emotional scene. I couldn't do it again for 10 minutes because I was laughing so hard."

Will that one make it onto the end-of-season blooper reel?

"I don't know," she says. "All you can see on camera is my head dropping out of frame, and then everyone starts laughing."

Having regular work has meant that Cohan can be a little picky about what other jobs she's looking for. "I'm just starting to get back into auditions," she says. "My managers and I are trying to see if it's possible to do films in between episodes, which is really tricky. I'll have two weeks off, three on, then maybe three days working in the middle of an off period." She's also looking for TV guest spots and other similar gigs.

"But I'm also getting caught on the theater thing again," she says, a little wistfully, which brings us full circle. While she was waiting for lightning to strike after her move to L.A., Cohan got involved in the Ruskin Theater Group, which does an ongoing series of 24-hour plays in Santa Monica. "The writers meet in the morning," she explains, "and they write a play. The actors come in at 12 noon, rehearse, and then perform at seven o'clock in a café theater. It's exhilarating, and quite terrifying."

The café plays also keep Cohan in touch with her theatrical roots. "I did three or four Shakespeare plays a year in university, and then the touring work, and then went two and a half years without doing anything before starting to work with the Ruskin group. It's a great way of exercising my theater muscle.

"There's a play I might do by one of the writers from the café plays," continues Cohan, when asked about her next move. Meanwhile, her latest feature (*Float*) is in post-production, probably to appear next year. Right now, though, she's back off to the *Supernatural* set. Maybe she'll find out today what Bela's dark family secret is. Or maybe she'll wait so it's as much of a surprise to her as it will be to us.

The hunt may now be over for FBI Agent Victor Henriksen thanks to Lilith's actions in season three's *Jus In Bello*, but actor Charles Malik Whitfield would still like to hear more from his misguided *Supernatural* alter ego...

FREE AGENT

Words: Jayne Nelson

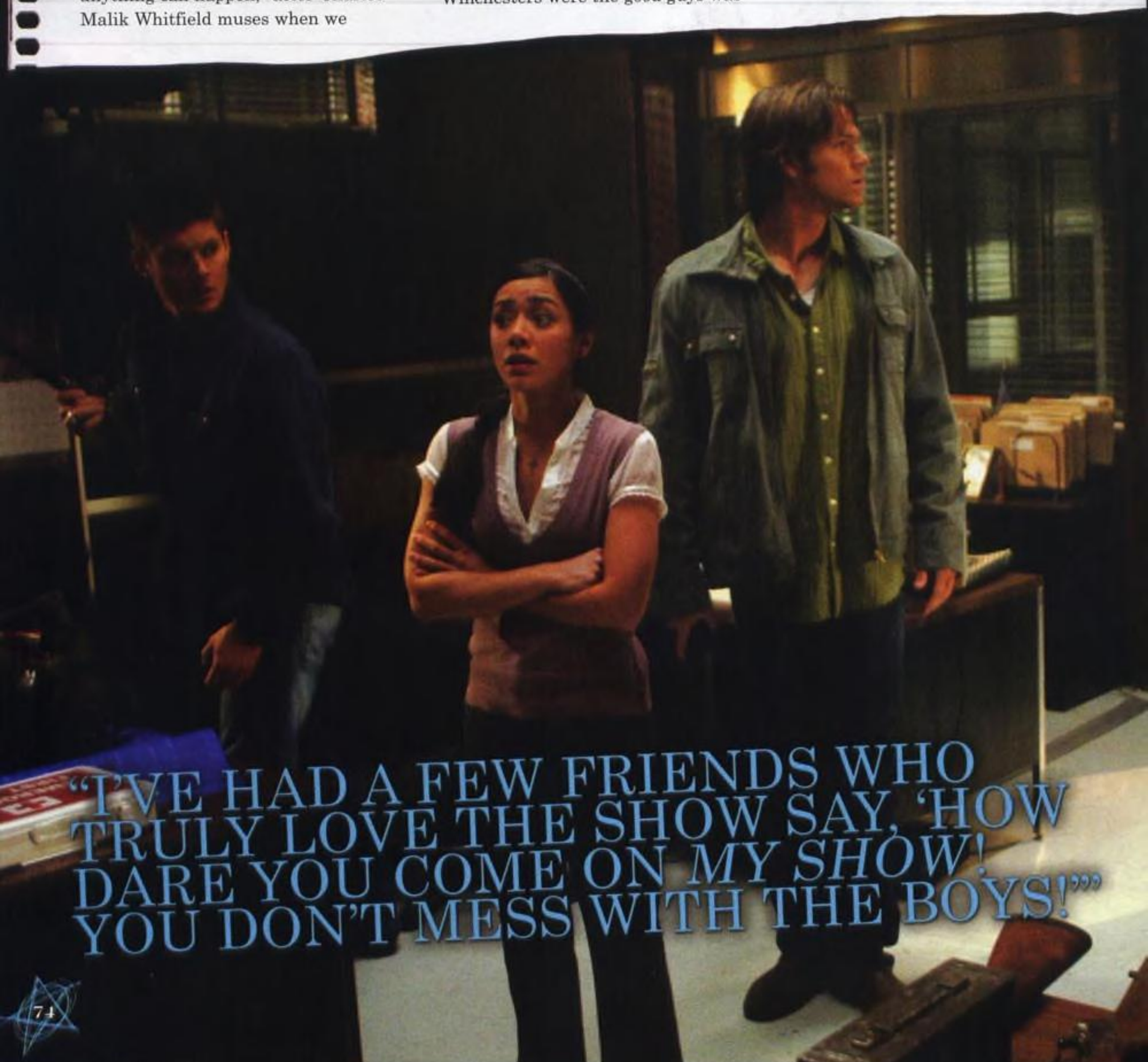
Agent Victor Henriksen really didn't have much luck, did he? After spending two years hot on the trail of two brothers wanted for murder, credit card fraud and grave desecration (during which time they escaped from his clutches not once, but *twice*), the hapless FBI agent eventually discovered he'd been hunting the wrong guys all along. However, mere hours after seeing the light and realizing the error of his ways, along came a demon in the guise of a little girl to put his lights out forever. Talk about bad timing!

Still, perhaps there's a small chance Agent Henriksen could return. "You know, the way television is written, anything can happen," actor Charles Malik Whitfield muses when we suggest a rebirth for his alter ego. "Especially when you don't see the actual, complete death, although it is implied. When you deal in the realm of demons, who knows?"

He laughs – something he does a lot during our chat – and goes on to ponder what could have happened to Henriksen if he hadn't died at the end of *Jus In Bello*. "I would have liked to have seen him become a civilian. I wouldn't have liked to have seen him behind a desk, though. I'd have been really interested in knowing how he walks without a badge, getting behind the guise of the FBI and that whole world. It would have been really interesting to see him like that."

Suddenly discovering that the Winchesters were the good guys was certainly a shock for poor Victor, but his world was totally shaken up when he went on to discover that demons were real... "Totally!" Whitfield laughs. "It's a great, huge starting point for new beginnings, for his life, which is a complete whirlwind. If he was to stay alive, where would he go, how proactive would he have been? Either joining the fight, joining the cause, or how easily could he have been swayed to go to the dark side of things? You never know! It was so interesting."

Charles Malik Whitfield ("Call me Malik," he instructs us cheerfully at the start of our chat) is just one of several guest stars on *Supernatural* who have become fan favorites after



"I'VE HAD A FEW FRIENDS WHO TRULY LOVE THE SHOW SAY, 'HOW DARE YOU COME ON *MY SHOW*! YOU DON'T MESS WITH THE BOYS!'"

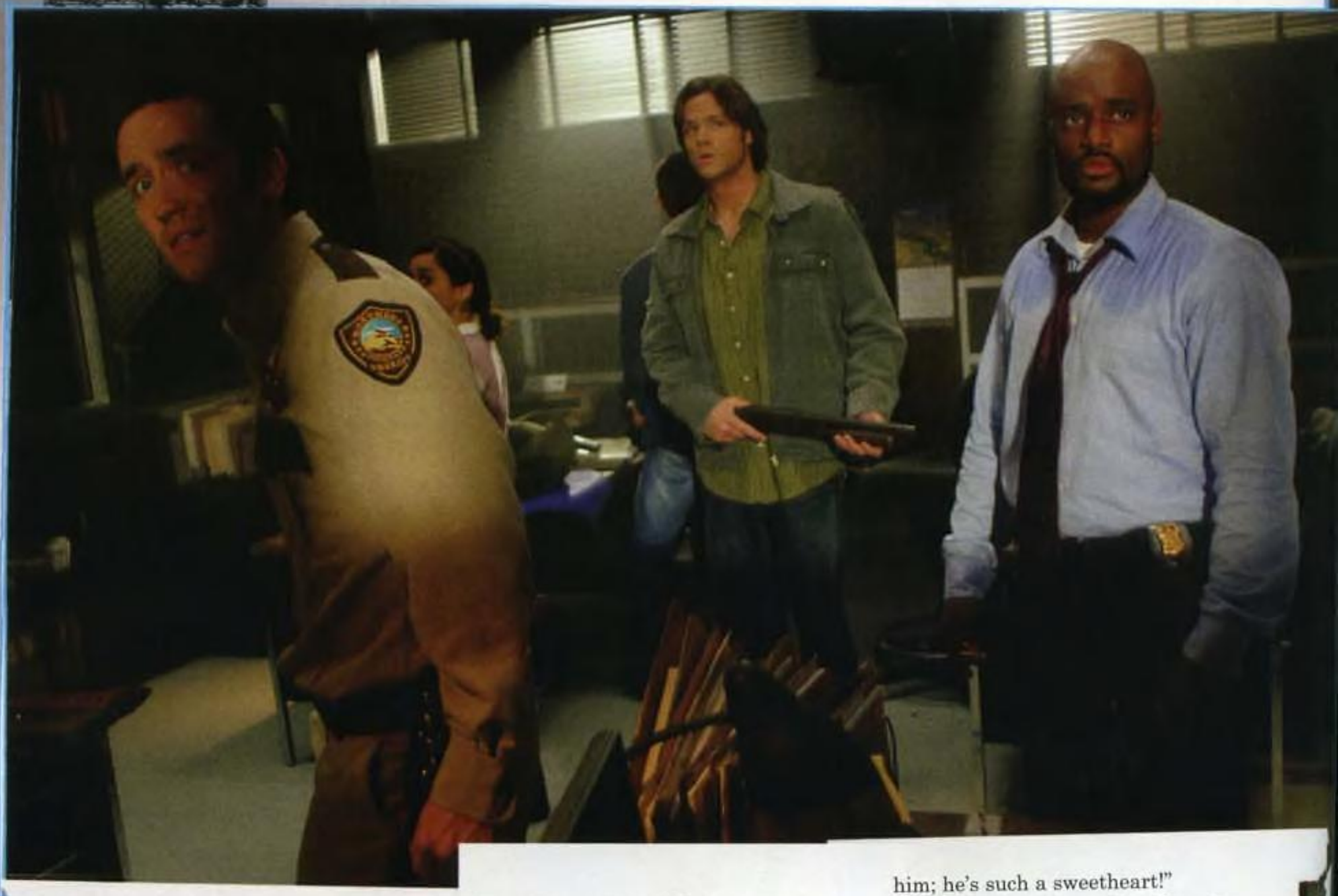
only a handful of appearances (in his case, three: *Nightshifter*, *Folsom Prison Blues*, and *Jus In Bello*). "I enjoyed doing [the show]," he nods, sounding proud to have appeared on the series. "I got to work with director Phil Sgriccia more than I did anybody else, and I just really, really enjoyed the show. It's a very fun set! I'm pretty much a goofball, I have a lot of fun and a lot of laughs. I've had a few friends who truly love the show say, 'How dare you come on my show! You don't mess with the boys!'"

Was he a fan of *Supernatural* before taking on the role of Agent Victor Henriksen? "Initially I hadn't seen the show," he admits, "so I came up to Vancouver and asked for all the first season's episodes. I was sitting in my hotel room watching the very first episode of the show, and the mother hit the ceiling and I thought, 'This is wrong...!' And, 'Are the lights getting a little dim in here...?' I'm pretty difficult to get scared to that point, so I was very impressed!"

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

As you no doubt remember, Agent Henriksen's first encounter with the Winchesters took place during the bank siege in *Nightshifter* – specifically, during a memorable phone call to Dean. "Wasn't that cool?" Whitfield chuckles. "It's so funny, most of the time [on shows] it's like, 'Hit the jokes, make them funny,' and it's kind of bad sometimes when you read something and you go, 'Is this *supposed* to be funny?!' So when you get to believe in the material and love it too, it's great, it really is."

Henriksen certainly made a great debut, but we still don't know that much about him. Some actors like to make up a back-story for their characters; did Whitfield do that for Victor? "I did," he reveals. "I'm a lot younger than most FBI agents, so for me, it's like, 'How do I portray him as a little older?' I definitely got from reading what they wrote that I was trying to make him as isolated as possible. The more isolated he was, the more he would be able to stand up and just get things done, even though there [were] more than enough talented people around him. I don't think anyone would measure up to his standards! I definitely had a fondness for him. You automatically get a sense of identifying not only with the character, but with his journey, being so hell-bent and trying to follow through despite his deep reservations. And the balance of, 'Where does that fit with your life?' Every time it resonates with the guys, because you can see the reflections of them together."



Indeed, in *Jus In Bello* it became apparent that Victor and Dean had quite a lot in common – after all, they're both hunters, albeit in different worlds. Did the actor have any idea that was going to happen? "No," he says flatly. "I didn't think so at all. But that's the beauty of life! You choose to try to cultivate your life and grow. You've gotta take the step forward and have the courage to [do that]. Where you get sometimes you never expect to get! You say, 'Well, I never saw myself being here, but this feels kinda alright, this fits!'

"Just getting on the set was fun," he continues. "You get a quick sense of family and camaraderie with the fellows and the cast and everybody up there during shooting. It's a great place and a great environment to work in. For some young actors they come on set it's always important – the job, the next gig, and so forth, but for me, over the past few years it's been about having a great time. Letting it rock and letting it roll and enjoying the experience."

Before setting off to chase the Winchesters around the country, Whitfield was probably best known for playing an altogether different character – real-life singer Otis Williams – in a movie charting the career of one of Motown's greatest acts. "I've been really fortunate and blessed to have [done] some really great movies like *The Temptations*, which has a cult following around the world," the actor says. "I can go to Cuba and people are like, 'Hey! You're in my favorite movie!' That's a great feeling."

The Temptations isn't his only real-life role, either; as we speak, Whitfield is finishing filming the movie *Notorious* in New York, in which he plays Wayne Barrow, the manager of murdered rapper the Notorious B.I.G.

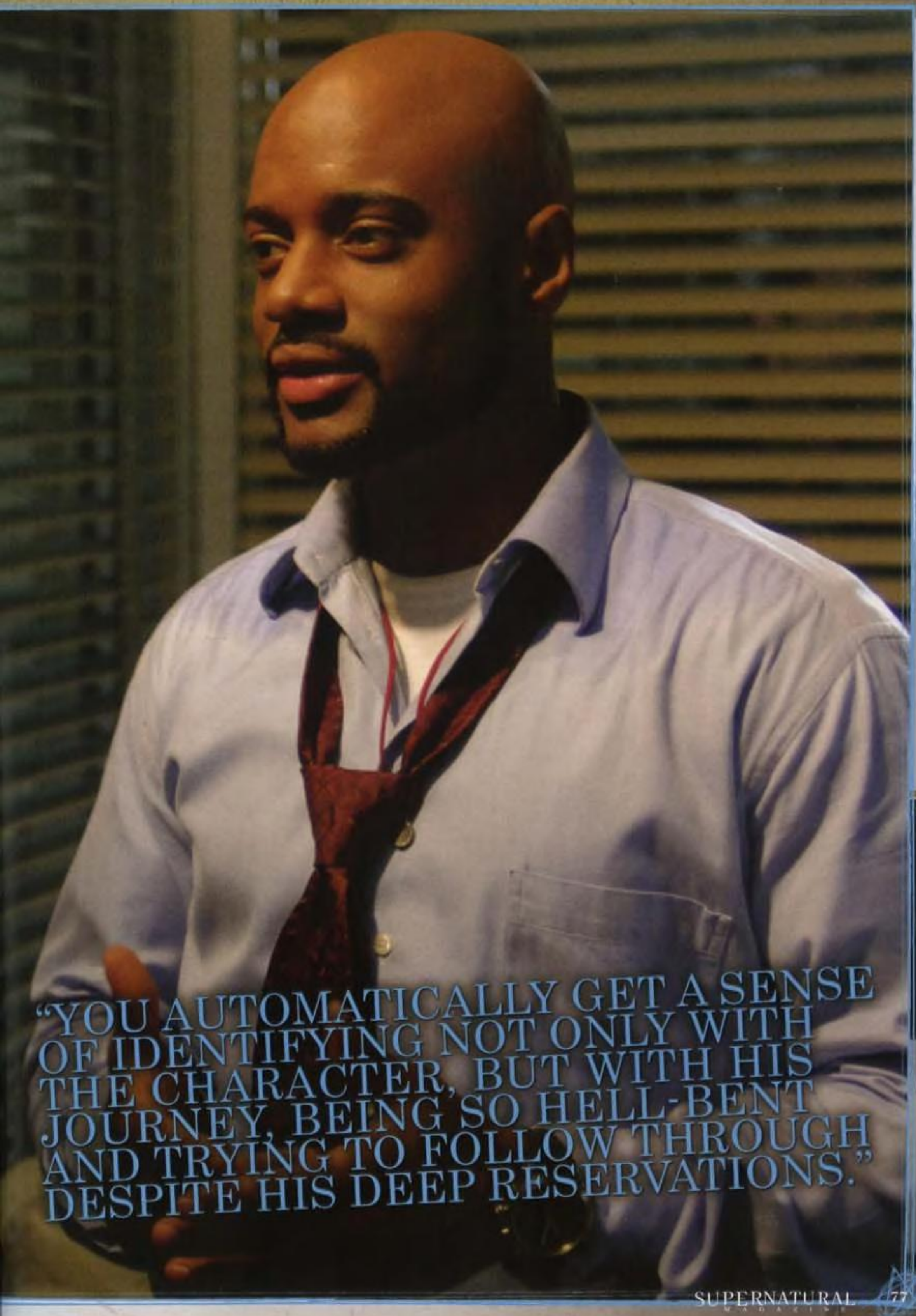
"It's interesting, because I knew Biggie," he explains. "I knew him more in passing, really. So many people don't know about the whole rap world and the energy and what Biggie did to New York. It's surreal to be hanging out with the guy I'm playing every day and working at getting his mannerisms down. I couldn't be any luckier playing him; he's such a sweetheart!"

Oddly, his work as Henriksen has managed to follow him into the rap world. "While I was filming in New York a few of the people on the movie were like, 'Oh my God! I'm so upset you got killed off *Supernatural*!'" he laughs. "I've definitely gotten recognized from the show. My look changes a lot, though, so people are sometimes like..." he puts on a quizzical voice, "'Are you from *Supernatural*?'"

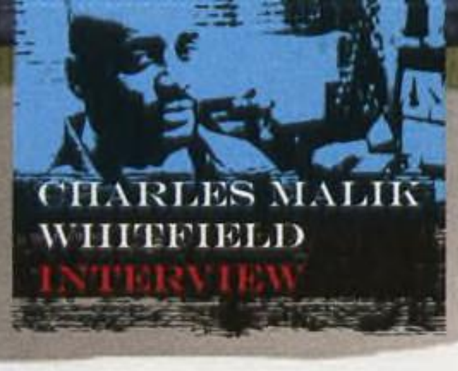
SHOOTING THE SHERIFF

For his final appearance as Henriksen, Whitfield got to flex his acting muscles, going "dark side" when the FBI agent was possessed. "It's always fun when you're playing someone who's bad, or just dead wrong," the actor grins. "It's the only time you can't get in trouble! It's kind of like no harm, no foul. You can push the envelope, because in the real world you couldn't do it at all!"

Of course, after being possessed Henriksen also got to deliver the immortal line, "I shot the sheriff!"



"YOU AUTOMATICALLY GET A SENSE OF IDENTIFYING NOT ONLY WITH THE CHARACTER, BUT WITH HIS JOURNEY, BEING SO HELL-BENT AND TRYING TO FOLLOW THROUGH DESPITE HIS DEEP RESERVATIONS."



Which was followed by Dean's classic comeback line, "But you didn't shoot the deputy." How on Earth did they keep a straight face filming those zingers?

"We did laugh a few times at that," Whitfield admits. "It's funny, we were actually on strike at the time, so there were no writers on the set that day to say, 'Don't do this, don't do that, add this or add that.' It was almost as if we could film different versions of it. But Jensen hit it right on, and it was so funny!"

There were other things to worry about during the filming of *Jus In Bello*, however... such as Henriksen's dunking in a toilet bowl. "I got so much razzing before that," Whitfield sighs. "'So, Malik, your head goes in the toilet.' 'I didn't read that! What?' 'No, Malik, don't worry about it, it's gonna be fine!'" He laughs. "I was like, 'No, it looks really bad...'"

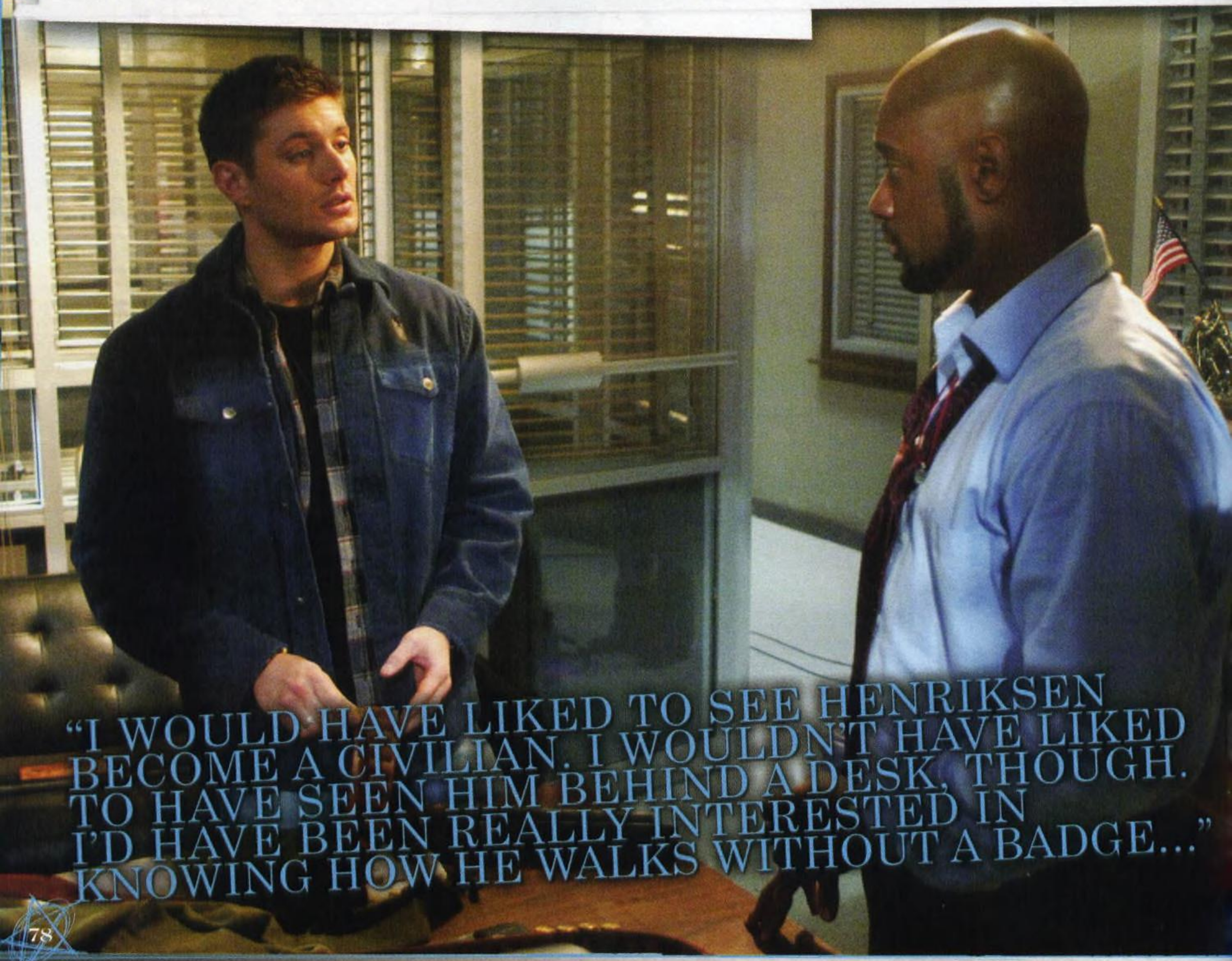
Thankfully, the actor reassures us that the water was clean. It could have been nasty: we've heard the stories of certain people playing practical jokes on set... "They do, but you know what? They're such light, good jokes, you end up laughing your butt off," Whitfield points out. "If I'm not on my mark, or I'm not hitting it or something like that, I'll just go, 'It's the cameras! Guys, guys, come on, when you're ready!' It's just a set where nobody's really uptight, and we hit it and we quit it, and even with the long hours we make the best of it."

He's full of admiration for the end result of the cast and crew's endeavors, too. "You know what? This doesn't come off as a corny show at all, because the writing's so tight. It still balances and has edge. It can be really scary. I can't say any show that I've seen can pull it off like that! There are a lot of really good shows, but nothing hits it like *Supernatural*. I haven't gotten to watch it every week because I'm out of town, but it's on my family TiVo, so I get to watch it all in one go." Even though he's no longer goofing around on set, Whitfield still meets up with the Winchesters off-screen. "I get to catch up with the guys. [We] don't live far from each other in California, so we bump into each other [occasionally]."

The stars may still see each other, but it doesn't look as though we'll be seeing any more of Henriksen for the time being. Which brings us to one last question: Henriksen must have noticed the Winchesters' knack with false names for themselves as they travel around the country. If Henriksen was on the run, what nickname would he give himself?

The actor thinks for a long time. "Hmm," he says, at last. "It's hard to say because I think he would just nickname himself something different. Like Santino. Santino the Great!"

Keep your eyes open for anyone called Santino in season four, folks...



"I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO SEE HENRIKSEN BECOME A CIVILIAN. I WOULDN'T HAVE LIKED TO HAVE SEEN HIM BEHIND A DESK, THOUGH. I'D HAVE BEEN REALLY INTERESTED IN KNOWING HOW HE WALKS WITHOUT A BADGE..."

TRACI DINWIDDIE INTERVIEW

SECOND SIGHT

When Bobby called in psychic help after Dean came back from Hell, it was from one of *Supernatural*'s most popular guest characters, Pamela Barnes, played by Traci Dinwiddie, who sadly paid the price for her involvement with the Winchesters. We caught up with Traci before she filmed Pamela's tragic ending...

Words: Bryan Cairns

The Official Supernatural Magazine: Before landing the role of Pamela Barnes, did you regularly tune in to _Supernatural_?

Traci Dinwiddie: To tell the truth, I was familiar with *Supernatural* through the bloopers video on *YouTube*. I'm a big bloopers fan. Isn't that pathetic? [*Laughs*] When they called me, I said, "Those guys are hilarious when they screw up!" Then I did the research and checked out all the episodes I could find. At the time, one of my good friends was a huge *Supernatural* fan, and she sent me the first two seasons. I had to watch them during the day, though. I get so scared, which is why I wasn't watching it initially!

How was Pamela described to you on the page?

I think it was as a badass psychic in a hot Gina Gershon kind of way. They mentioned she was a Ramones-loving rocker chick. I thought that was great because I got to be bold and unapologetic, which was an immediate attraction. After the premiere of the season, I spoke with Eric Kripke, and he mentioned Pamela Barnes was created from the essence of the *Supernatural* fandom. I thought that was fascinating! He mentioned she was like a kickass fan; she's loyal and wickedly open about her opinions and playfulness. Although she loves a good laugh, she also locks it down when business needs tending to. Pamela is serious, cheeky, and Eric wrote her with that in mind, so I thought that was a neat way to bring a character to life.

Sometimes it feels like Pamela's had one too many coffees or Red Bulls.

Is it exhausting keeping those energy levels up?

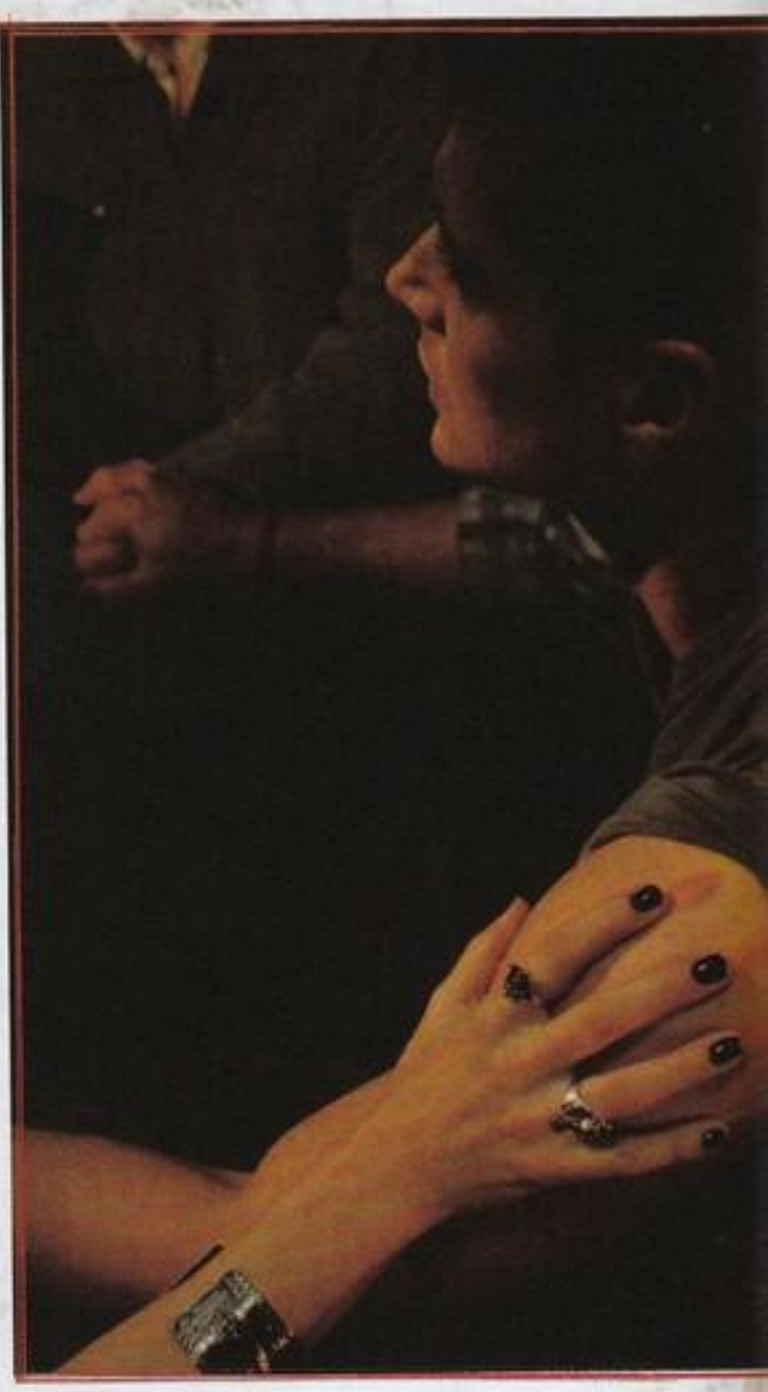
I can't even explain it. It's almost like lights on, action, and being pumped. Being in the energy of that cast, it revs you up naturally. They're a good, likeable, fun-loving crew that you can't help but be jazzed when called upon. Of course, the scream was a little draining in the first episode we did [*Lazarus Rising*]. I was raspy and definitely conked out when it was time to go to bed from all the screaming and feeling the terror of actually having your eyes burned out.

Did you visit a psychic or do any special research for this part?

I have visited psychics. I've had my palms and tarot cards read. I have a friend who's much like Pamela in [terms of] psychometry, which is when you can gather a lot of information from touching an object or person. You can feel the vibrations around a scenario they've experienced or the object that they've been involved with. He's brought me to tears just by holding a piece of jewelry and telling me what was wrapped around that. Personally, I've had tons of ESP and clairvoyant experiences. It's just a matter of tapping into the energy and vibrations.

Was the majority of the eye meltdown in _Lazarus Rising_ done with CGI, or makeup?

Luckily, I didn't have to do any serious eyeball prosthetics. The scary part was we were dealing with fire blazing out of



"THEY'RE BOTH FABULOUS GUYS, AND IT DOESN'T HURT TO LOOK AT THEM, ALTHOUGH PAMELA HAD TO FEEL HER WAY AT THAT POINT. POOR PAM!"

those candles. The fire was probably a couple of feet high and the camera swoops right through it, so the flames are naturally projected forward and out. In the first couple of takes, I got really nervous and couldn't help but flinch. I had to really plant my feet down, open my eyes, not blink a second, and hit that very specific mark so they could CGI my eyes being burned out properly. That was a bit of a challenge.

"I SPOKE WITH ERIC KRIPKE, AND HE MENTIONED PAMELA BARNES WAS CREATED FROM THE ESSENCE OF THE *SUPERNATURAL* FANDOM."

Were you happy with how your first episode, *Lazarus Rising*, ultimately turned out?

Yeah, I was really pleased and so surprised by the sweet messages from the fans. From the get-go, right after I shot my very first scene, I received tons of messages via my website and MySpace. One of the fandom girls immediately wrote an article about me. I loved watching the scene, even though I miss my eyeballs [*laughs*].

Why do you think Pamela was so wholeheartedly embraced? *Supernatural* viewers have sometimes been pretty negative about some of the series' female characters.

Oh yes, I was forewarned. I have dared to take a peek into the lair of the *Supernatural* fandom, and I've seen some amazing comments. Eric did such a brilliant job creating this character. She is one of those relatable kind of

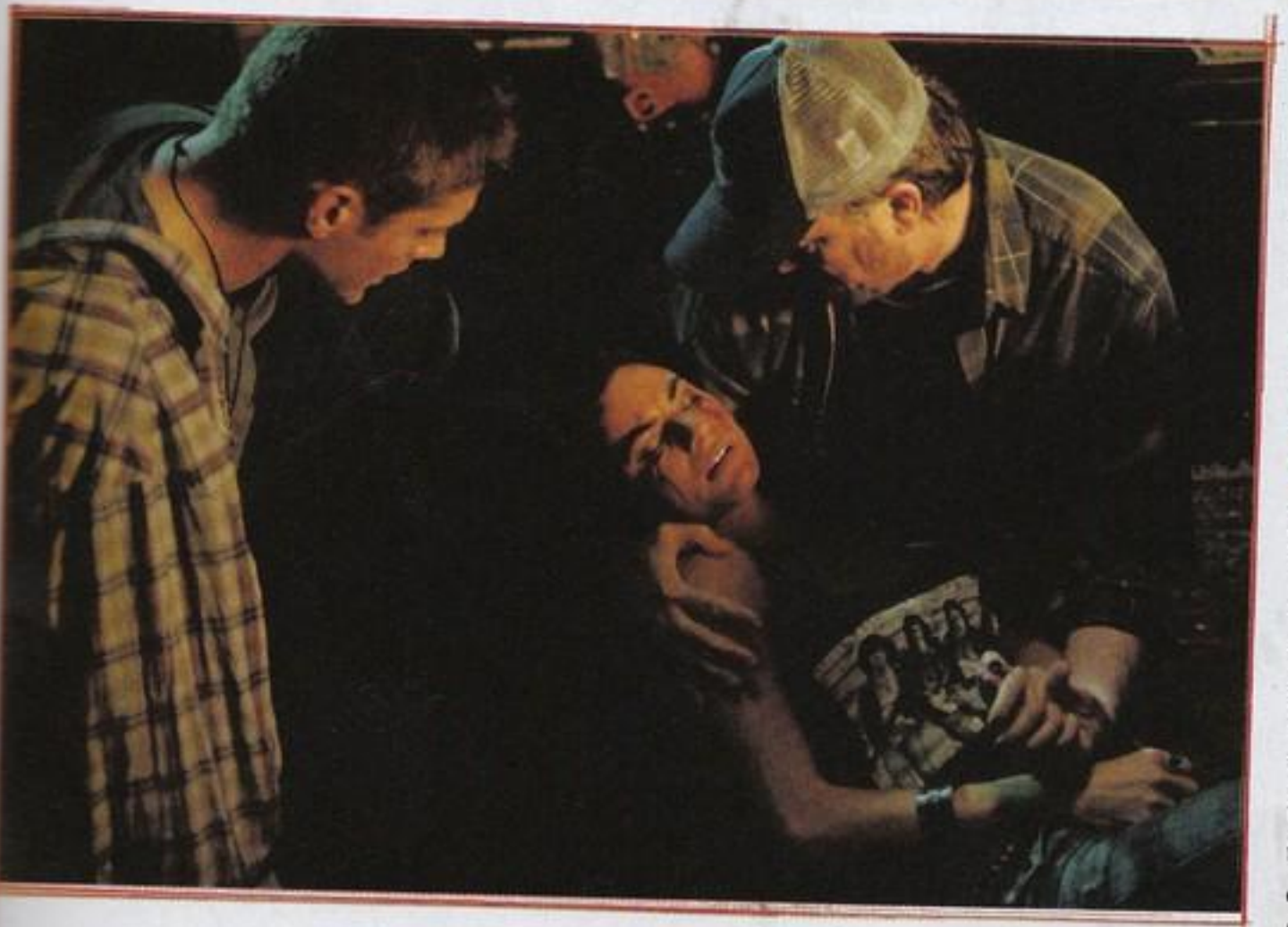
Were those white eyes CG as well?
No, they doubled up the contacts so I was truly blind for that particular scene. It was a really neat experience, and I [literally] couldn't see. During the fitting, they were uncomfortable, but on the day, it was fine. As a matter of fact, I was disappointed I had to take them off. [*Laughs*] It's really true; other senses become magnified when you're blind.

How much fun was all Pamela's flirting with the brothers?
Well, who doesn't enjoy a good flirt? What's best about that is it was completely playful. There's no promise there whatsoever. If anything, I think Pamela would have been into their papa John more than the young 'uns! He's an old soul. I did enjoy flirting in both episodes. And I'll tell you one thing… Oh my goodness, you *can* bounce a nickel off [Jared's behind]! [*Laughs*]

Was that all scripted, or did you improv slapping Sam's butt?
There's definitely space for that, but Eric put it in there.

Having flirted with both Dean and Sam, who would have been better suited for Pamela?
[*Sighs*] I'd say John. Really, she flirted with the boys because she could. I didn't see her hooking up with either one of them. I saw Pamela as a genuine comrade. They're both fabulous guys, and it doesn't hurt to look at them, although Pamela had to feel her way at that point. Poor Pam! [*Laughs*]

"I THINK PAMELA WOULD HAVE BEEN INTO THEIR PAPA, JOHN, MORE THAN THE YOUNG 'UNS!"



Pamela had pitched in when called upon, but would you have liked to see them delve into her past more?
Absolutely. What happened with Jesse? I have my own ideas. Of course, I always do my own personal preparation, but I'm curious to see what Eric, Sera, and the gang [would have come] up with for Pamela's path.

Despite being the guest star coming in during its fourth season, it sounds like you had a blast on *Supernatural*.
Yes, you're always the new kid on the block. They have their routine, but they are a very generous, friendly bunch, so it was so easy to slide right in and connect. We had a lot of fun things to talk about. I have some family in Texas, so we talked about that common interest. Jensen worked on *Dawson's Creek* and I'm from Wilmington, North Carolina, where it was filmed, so we got to talk about the hotel and film festival there.

Since you love bloopers, did you have any favorite ones from your episodes that should make the *Supernatural* reel?
Oh, I would have to see them again! I almost knocked myself in the head with my glasses. Because I couldn't see, I didn't know one of the arms was actually bent in. I boinked myself in the head trying to put the glasses on. There were also the typical tongue twisters that end up being cute. Maybe they'll use me almost running into the camera when I was blind as a bat [from the contacts]!

ADAM'S FAMILY VALUES

Adam was the brother Sam and Dean never knew they had, but something evil had already taken his place. Actor JAKE ABEL talks to *The Official Supernatural Magazine* about playing the third Winchester brother...

Words: Jayne Nelson

Some may have thought that the episode *Jump The Shark* might live up to its name when it was announced it would introduce a *third* Winchester brother. They would soon be proved wrong. When Sam and Dean met their half-brother Adam Milligan, however, he turned out to be a likeable young guy, but of course, things are never that simple in the world of *Supernatural*. Especially as Adam had already been replaced by a flesh-eating ghoul who wanted revenge on the Winchesters.

Actor Jake Abel had the task of playing this dual role of sorts, and *The Official Supernatural Magazine* caught up with him to find out about the taste of fake blood, what it's like playing a corpse, and why he asked Jared Padalecki to push him around!

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: So how did you get the role?**

Jake Abel: I live in LA and auditioned for it. I went in to see the producers and Eric Kripke was there too. I read a few scenes, went over it and had a good time, and later they called and said, "Hi, we're gonna need you in Canada!" It was fairly quick and easy.

Had you seen *Supernatural* before?

I had because two friends of mine really like the show and kept telling me I had to watch it. So I watched a few episodes and thought, "This is actually a good show, I don't know why I don't watch it. This show's got some punch to it." When I got the role I was sent a couple of seasons to watch, to get a feel of Sam and Dean's [dynamic], and I was hooked. I watched every episode they gave me. Even though I don't have a particular aversion to clowns, that clown episode that Phil Sgriccia directed [*Everybody Loves A Clown*] – he also directed my episode – was one of the scariest episodes they've done.

Some people don't realize quite how scary and gross *Supernatural* can be...

What's so funny is that they're already pushing so much of the gore, because Adam Milligan – who I played – when he was eaten up, we were full-on showing the whole body, all this blood and tendons, and it was just nasty! They were like, "This is wicked, it's gonna look great!" I talked to Phil at the wrap party for the season and he said, "They're not gonna let us show all that. We have to shine a flashlight on it." I said, "That's lame!" And he said "I know!" Maybe the DVD release will show the full [effect]. I hope it does, because it was pretty gruesome!

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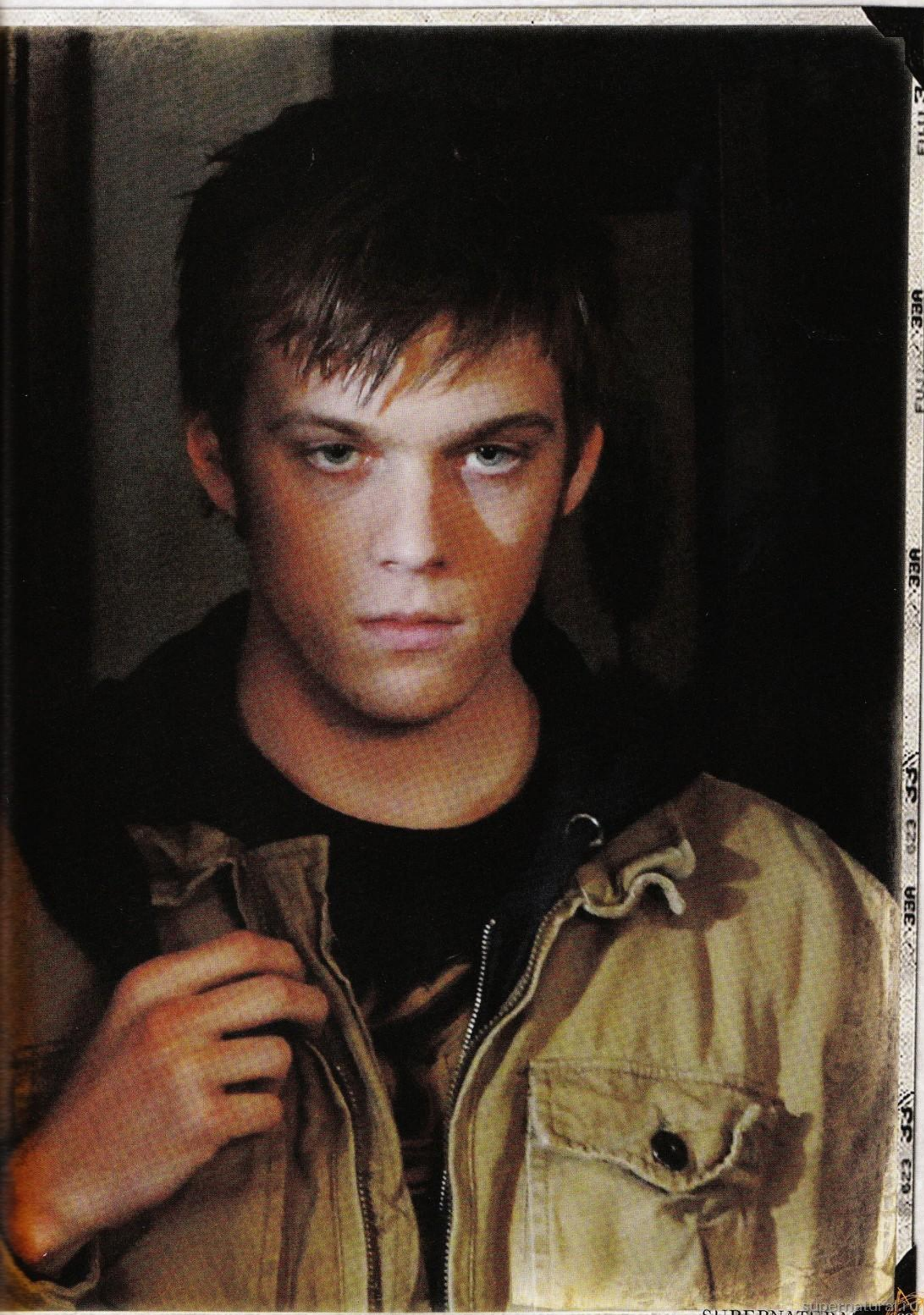
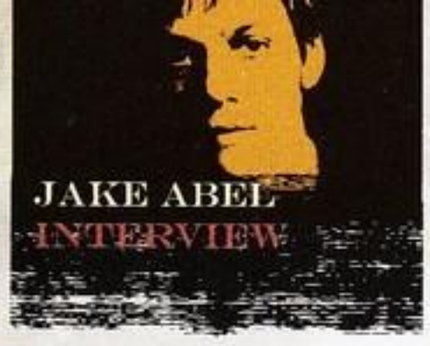
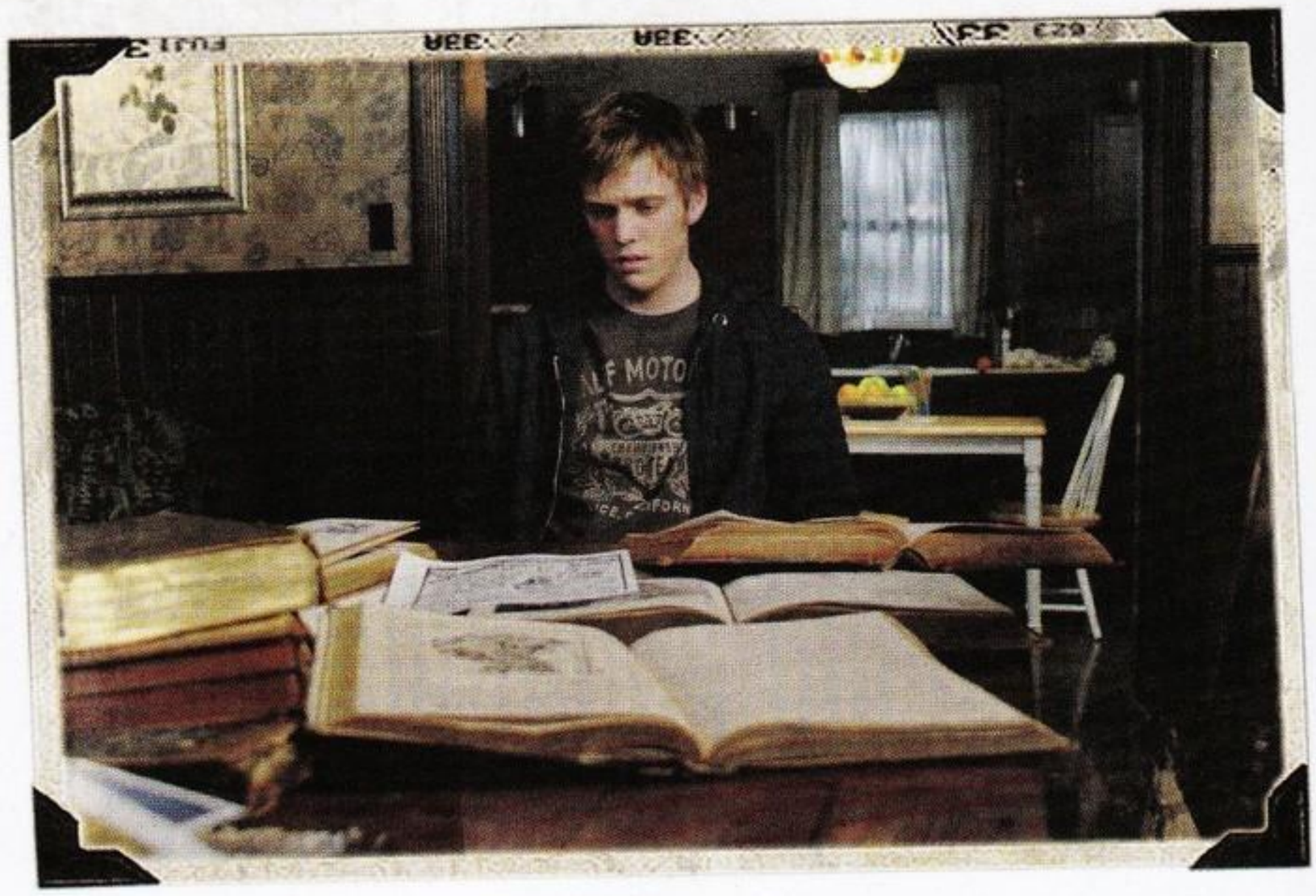




What was it like to play your own corpse?
Terrifying! That show put me through a couple of things that no person regularly goes through in their lives, like being in a coffin at 21 years old, you know? I sent those pictures to my mom and she said the same thing – "That's not something you ever wanna see your kid in…"

What a nice thing to send your mom. "Hey, I saw this and I thought of you!"
[*Laughs*] Yeah, "Check it out, I'm dead!" You're in this false-bottom casket with the face makeup on and all that, and you slip into it. They had me sitting on a chair underneath the coffin with my head out, and there's this chest piece that kinda sits on top of me, and they connect the spinal cord and the legs to that. My hands are there, so I can look down and pretty much reach inside my chest and touch my fake legs. I told Jensen, "Okay, when this coffin door shuts, you shut it at the last minute." And he was like, "Alright," because he knew. The casket was touching my nose, plus I wanted to keep my eyes open the whole time, so I had that realistic dead effect. I took a deep breath and then they said "action" and he popped it open and



"I didn't want anyone to let out how many episodes I was doing – I wanted the fans to completely think that this was the third Winchester brother."

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shined his flashlight on me. It was actually a pretty intense experience [*laughs*]. We made it as enjoyable as we could.

It was very effective, and it was such a surprise finding out that Adam was dead!

They did a wicked edit on it, I thought. I watched it with two friends and I didn't tell them much about it, and they were flipping out toward the end because it was this emotional rollercoaster – this tennis match back and forth between Sam and Dean. It was pretty wicked!

When did you find out you were going to play a Winchester?

I knew some [elements] of the show, and I'd watched a few episodes beforehand, so when I read the breakdown and saw that he was their long-lost third brother, it kind of put more pressure on the role. I've played a real-life person before in a movie, and that was strange because I wanted to talk to him a lot and get this feel for who he was at that age. This was almost like playing a real person, because these *Supernatural* fans are *die hard*. I kept thinking, "What am I getting myself into?" They love their boys! They love Sam and Dean! For me, I love characters that come in one way and leave a different way, so you think they're one person but they really are a different person. That was what was so much fun, because we all had to sell that I was just a real Winchester brother. It pissed a lot of people off, which was great! I would hear fans saying things like, "Kripke wouldn't do this to us! Kripke wouldn't! He won't do it! It's something else!" It was great to hear people, after watching the episode, saying, "About halfway through I started accepting it, 'Okay, here's another brother. Great!'" They seemed to like Adam. That was the best part. They were like, "I still don't know if I want a third brother, but I feel bad for him!"

Did you hang out with Jared and Jensen to study their mannerisms?

Yeah, absolutely. Even before I got to Canada and they gave me the tapes, I had a week to watch every episode, and I was trying to see what their interactions were like, because even though it's nature versus nurture, my character didn't grow up with them, so my mannerisms would be different. But as far as their voices or a few body tics here and there, whatever they had, I really tried to get that family thing going, including with Jeffrey Dean Morgan. That whole thing that Jensen's got going on: [*lowers voice*] "Sammy!" You know? I tried to embody that as much as possible but also tried to make him someone who grew up apart from Sam and Dean.

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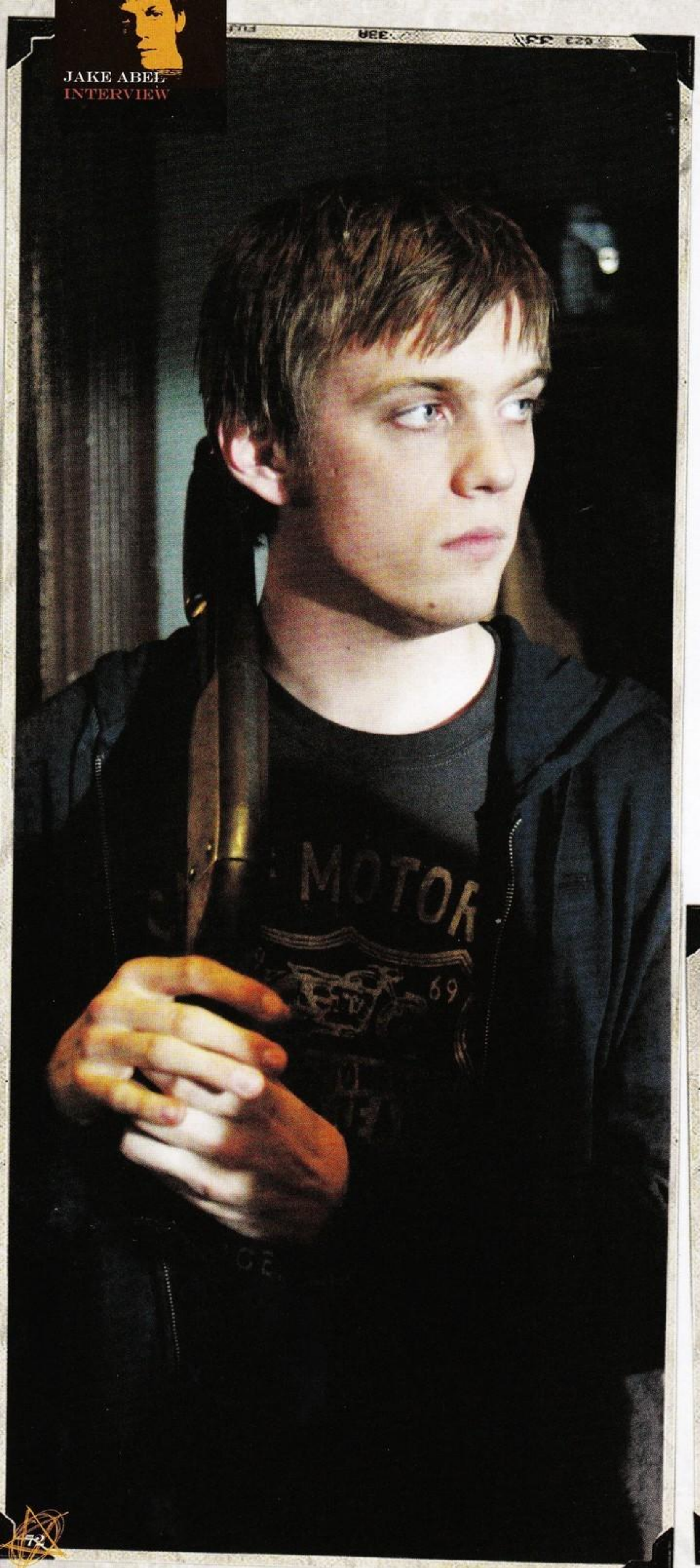

You had a really difficult role, to be honest, because all the way through the episode Adam had to be upset – he'd just lost his mom and so much stuff was happening. You had to emote a lot, which much have been difficult...

Most of it was just, "How do I not make this boring?" The show's fun, the show's quick, it's fast-paced and those guys are cracking jokes, so to be that kid that comes in and says, "I lost my mom!" It's sad! It sucks! The Winchesters deal with things differently. They deal in this fantastic level of life, so Adam hasn't had that part of him, so he couldn't be "cry, cry, tears," all the time. There's something in him, a survival instinct. Plus, he's a ghoul. Hopefully people were like, "Why's he doing that? Oh, because he's a ghoul!"

There are quite a few layers there! The ghoul was a good actor. He did a great job at being Adam.

That's the thing with playing stuff like that! You can't play it like, "Okay, so I'm Adam, but really in the back of my brain I'm a ghoul!" It kind of complicates it too much. You just gotta go in and play it as Adam; Adam who lost his mother. Then when the ghoul comes out, that's really where the fun happens!

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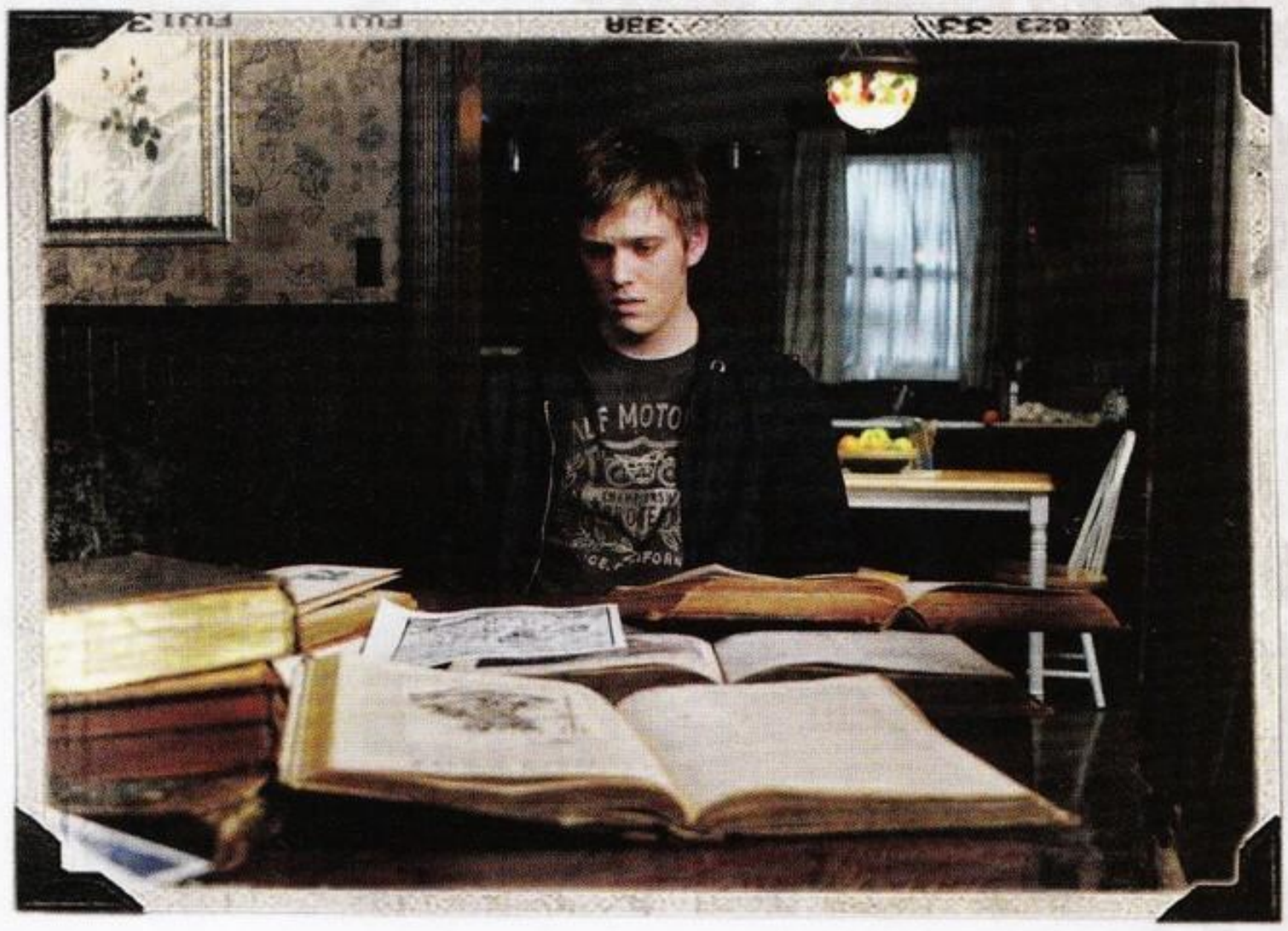
Did you have a lot more fun playing the ghoul, then?
With Dedee Pfeiffer on your side, who was just wonderfully wacky in that role, it was something else. I'll tell you another thing – Jared had some mad trust, because we really had him tied down to that table. There was a moment where I slam a knife by his head, and I didn't tell him I was going to do it, it was just something I came up with. For the first couple of takes I was like, "Are you okay with that? I'm slamming a knife by your head!" and he was like, "Hey, if it looks good…" You know, I've always been kind of afraid of doing a television show, being on one series for a lot of years – it's always been something that's kind of weirded me out. But those guys made me feel like, okay, if it's this kind of show and this kind of cast, then *maybe*. Which is huge for me! They really made it a great time. You can tell people enjoy coming to that set.

What was the blood made of that you guys were licking off your fingers?
It tasted awful! And poor Dedee, that whole scene, she was just sucking that blood out of everything! It was chocolate based, but it did *not* taste like chocolate. It was like something… something funky! [*Laughs*] It wasn't delicious by any means, and it



"I would hear fans saying things like, 'Kripke wouldn't do this to us!'"

wasn't corn syrup. I have no idea! But it looked real, that's all we needed.

As if the blood wasn't bad enough, you had to stick your finger inside Sam's stomach. How was that achieved?
It was a camera trick kind of deal. They had bloodied him up and put something there that was made to look like torn up, bloody flesh. You put your finger in and collapse it at the knuckle so it looks like it's going in but it's really not, so I had to put my finger in at the right angle and twist it. The twisting part really added to it! [*Laughs*]

Did you identify with Adam?
His life was completely different to anything I've ever been through...

Particularly the ghoul part, obviously?
[*Laughs*] Also the parent thing, and being separated from your real brothers… it's something that's completely foreign to me. But the human emotion of losing someone is still the same. I guess I get those characters who have an underlying secret that comes out at the end. That's the fun of it. I didn't want anyone to let out how many episodes I was doing – I wanted the fans to completely think that this was the third Winchester brother – whether they were pissed off, or happy, or they were intrigued, I only wanted them to think, "This is the third Winchester, and I have no idea how long he's gonna be on the show." I wanted to play that prank, for lack of a better word.

And the episode was called *Jump the Shark*, which was perfect…
One of the billboards outside the diner, I believe, was actually made as an homage to *Happy Days* and the jumping the shark scene. When I first met Phil he was like a little kid, he was giddy! "It's called *Jump the Shark*! It's gonna be so great!" He was a phenomenal director.

A lot of people say that about the directors up there in Vancouver. Do you spend a lot of time in the city?
I do now! I've been here for four and a half months, not including the two weeks I was on *Supernatural*. I'd never been to Vancouver in my life before the show. When it's not raining it's beautiful.

What are you shooting up there at the moment?
I'm doing a movie called *Percy Jackson*, a Chris Columbus film. It's based on the

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ROB
BENEDICT
INTERVIEW

While Sam and Dean found out their lives were the subject of a series of novels, writer Carver Edlund (aka Chuck Shurley), discovered that not only was every word he wrote true, but that he was also a prophet of the Lord. *The Official Supernatural Magazine* spoke to actor Rob Benedict about playing this unlikely prophet...

Words: Jayne Nelson

HE IS THE PROPHET CHUCK!

ROB BENEDICT INTERVIEW

Of all the people who could be a prophet of the Lord, one of the least likely would surely be a socially awkward, bathrobe-wearing writer of pulp novels. That proved to be exactly the case, however, as Chuck Shurley was identified as the writer of what will later become known as the Winchester Gospel.

Actor Rob Benedict came to *Supernatural* after regular roles on shows like *Felicity*, and *Threshold*, and we caught up with him to find out more about what it's like to play this modern-day prophet…

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: How did you prepare for the role of Chuck Shurley?**

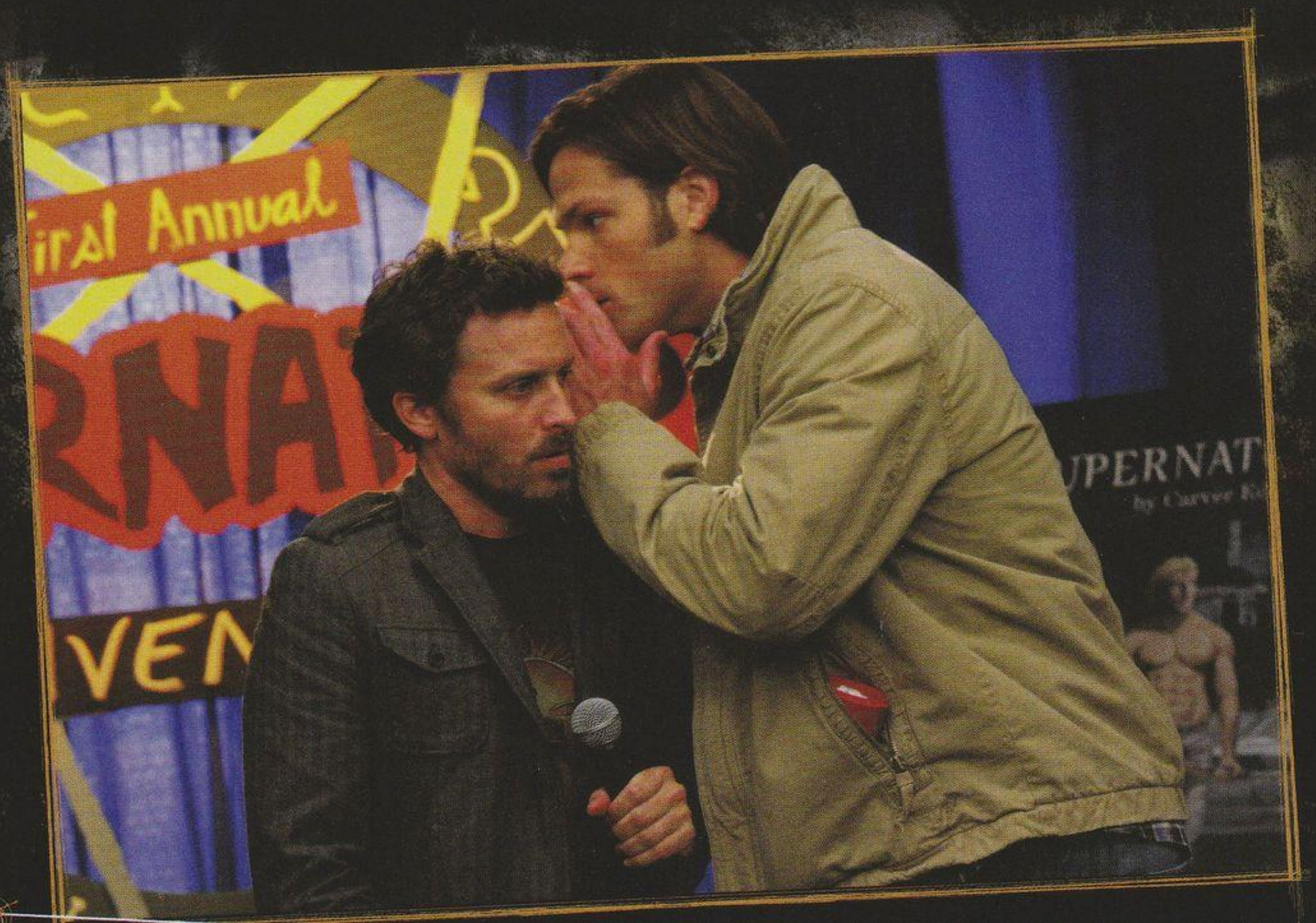
Rob Benedict: I hadn't seen the show, so because Chuck has to know so much of the backstory of these guys I went out and rented the first couple of seasons and caught up. So much of the stuff that I said in that first episode were in-jokes and references to other episodes, such as the episodes with the bugs [*Bugs*] and the ghost ship [*Red Sky at Morning*]. I wanted to know what I was talking about. By the time I went up to Vancouver I was an aficionado, but I didn't know a thing when I first went in! It's that kind of show – either you know it or you don't! Because of the nature of my role, I had to know. It was a good mixture – I knew the facts, but I was still new to it all, and in that episode [*The Monster at the End of This Book*] I'm still new to these guys and the idea that they've come and found me – "Wait a minute, you really exist?" So that was sort of easier to play. I felt like I'd been plucked out of LA and dropped into Vancouver and was like, "Okay, what am I in the middle of?"

Did you know when you took the role that Carver Edlund was an amalgamation of the names of two of the show's writers, Jeremy Carver and Ben Edlund? Do you think Chuck is based on them?

I noticed that when I got the script – "Oh wow, those are two of the writers' names." And yeah, I realized, "Oh wow, I'm *them*!" I don't think I'm necessarily mapped after one of the people [in particular], but I think I'm sort of a combination of them all together. Especially in that first episode – so many of the things I said were jokes from the writers' room. We were rehearsing that one scene I had in my first episode where I'm going over all the other things that I've written, and the cast and crew were all dying laughing because that was all inside jokes for them. The ghost ship episode *was* one that they were all rolling their eyes at. [*Laughs*] So yes, he's a combination of lots of the writers. And I think that a lot of times he's Eric Kripke!

You think Eric Kripke has surreptitiously written himself into the show?

I definitely think so. It's funny because he's referencing the actual fans online who watch the show and write about it, that sort of thing; he gives little nods to people. It was funny because maybe a month ago someone contacted me online because I'm in a band and they wanted me to do an interview, so I was in contact with this girl. She's great, she's really nice – she still emails. The fans are really great. Then I go up to Vancouver the next week to do the episode [*Sympathy For the Devil*], and in the episode my character contacts one of the fangirls, Becky, and has her go and contact the boys for me because I can't. I was like, "It's really happening! This is really merging into reality!"



"HE'S A COMBINATION OF LOTS OF THE SUPERNATURAL WRITERS. AND I THINK THAT A LOT OF TIMES HE'S ERIC KRIPKE!"

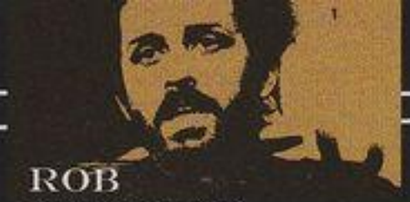
I definitely think [Chuck is] Kripke a little bit, and he directed the last episode I did last season [*Lucifer Rising*], so it was fun to be on set with Eric.

In *The Real Ghostbusters*, Chuck addresses a convention crowd. Have you been to any conventions yourself yet?

I had my first one in Chicago [for the Salute to *Supernatural* in November], and then the following week I went to England [for Collectormania]. I talked to Misha [Collins] about it and he was like, "Oh man, you're gonna love it – it's like the best audience ever!" I told him, "The fans know so much more than I do – what if they ask me a question and I don't know the answer?" He said, "It doesn't matter, man! You just talk and they love it!" [*Laughs*] So yeah, that'll be fun. And online, through Twitter and all these different ways they can get a hold of you… My band has a website, and fans have contacted me and it's all positive. It's all good. It's like a little family!

Chuck's wound pretty tight. How do you get into character? Do you drink lots of coffee?

You know, I *do* drink lots of coffee! That's because I feel like it gives me a focus before I go on, but maybe it tips me more into that Chuck direction! I think it's more a combination of me and the way they wrote it. In the first one [*The Monster at the End of This Book*] the character was supposed to be drunk. It was written that way – it would say, "Chuck's already half-sauced," or "Chuck's got a bottle in his hand." So I was kind of out of it! But when



ROB BENEDICT INTERVIEW

"YOU GET A ROLE ON THIS SHOW AND IT'S LIKE, OKAY, YOU RE IN THE FAMILY NOW. PROTECTED!"

Dean and Sam walk into a room, they're big guys. Jared and Jensen are big dudes, and I'm a little guy, so right away they come in and are like, "What's this about?" and I say, "…I don't know!" And I automatically go into 'scared, wounded bird' mode. In between the drinking, worrying in my head and all that stuff, was born the character. He's almost down on his luck, one of those lost writers – he never asked for this, you know? He always thought maybe he'd be better than this and write more, but he just felt like he's a hack. But now that he's involved in the stories, it gives him a new-found focus.

Chuck seemed to be a man on the edge of a nervous breakdown last season, but he's being more proactive now.

Exactly. It looks like it's going that way. It's almost like the Winchesters' real-life story is the glue that's holding Chuck together! And if that falters, I go, so that's the anxiety I'm playing. I've gotta keep all this stuff together. Somehow it feels as though it rests on my shoulders! Chuck's so scared of all the powers above us, the powers-that-be who all appear and disappear, and they freak him out a lot.

Speaking of which, what's it like working with Kurt Fuller as Zachariah?

He's awesome! He's actually one of the funniest guys I know. That's what's so great about the part that he plays – he's so evil, but he's actually a super-funny guy. He and I did a movie [*The Group*] together last year before we did *Supernatural*, so I knew him from that. We fly up and back together [to Vancouver] a lot and stay in touch. He's awesome! He's really, really funny. It's fun to see him flick that switch and become that really evil guy.

On the flipside you've got Castiel. How would you describe Chuck's relationship with him?

He's a big fan! [*Laughs*] I love Castiel and I love Misha. I really like that character a lot. There's something really warm about Castiel. I love having him on our side, on the good side. Misha's way cool, too – we actually have the same agent, so he was really warm toward me from the beginning, and he started in the same boat where he was a recurring character and now he's a regular. So every time I go up to Vancouver we hang out as well.

In the first episode of this season, *Sympathy For the Devil*, Chuck got covered in bits of Castiel. How *did* you manage to say that line about the tooth without cracking up?

[*Laughs*] He was a warm character who kind of exploded all over me! The funny thing about it was that the first time we shot that – I think we were rehearsing it – Sam said, "You got something on you," and pointed at one side of my head, and I instinctively went to the other side of my head. So he said, "No, other side." And we were laughing because that always happens, "You got something on your lip…" and you always go to the other side of your face. So we kept that in! And it was really gross. It *looked* like a tooth, it *felt* like a tooth, and every time we re-shot it they had to come back and re-plaster it back into my hair. I showered real good that night!

There is a lot of gore and gunk on *Supernatural*.

Oh God, yeah. There was another scene they cut out, actually, where I was washing the walls and they were all splattered red and everything. Way, way gross!

Speaking of Chuck's house, how much detail is there on the set that we perhaps can't see on screen?

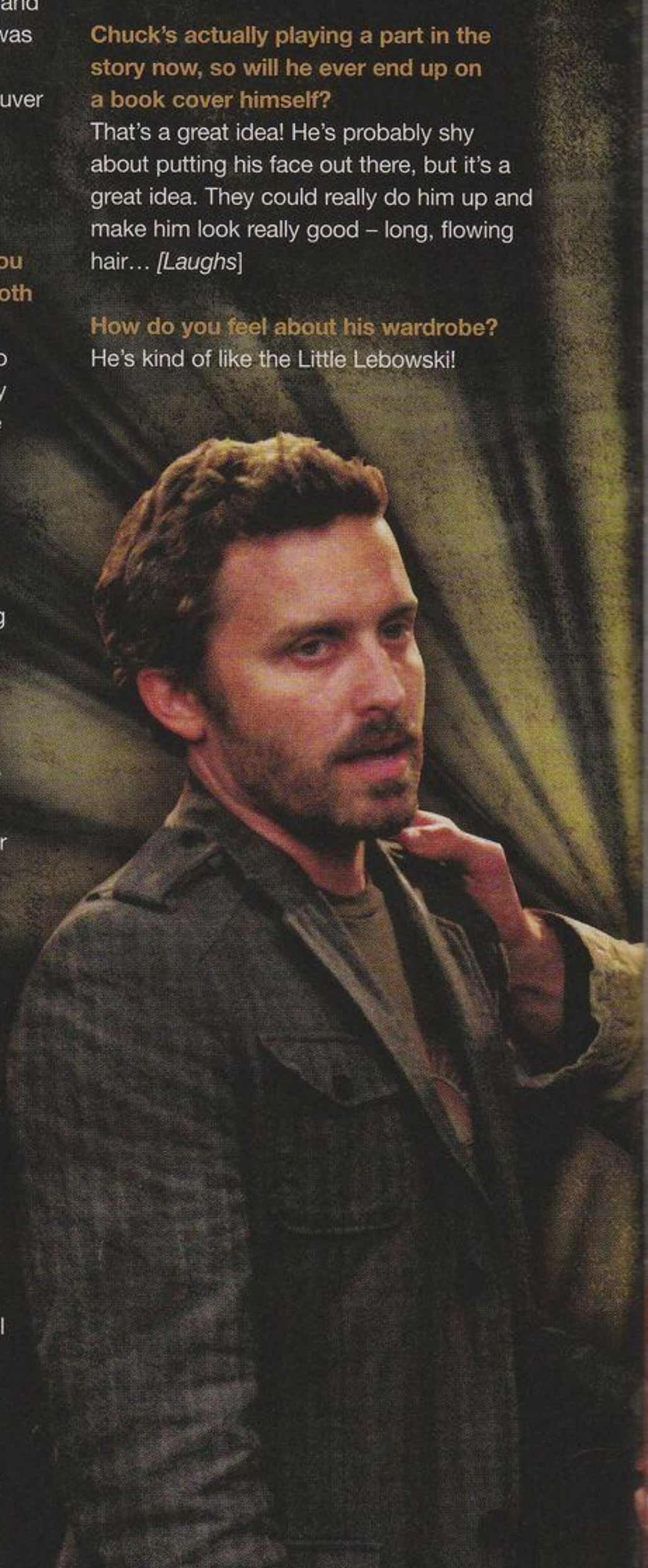
You know, there are posters on the wall in my house [set] of all my books, and they all reference different episodes. There'll be a picture of the car and a picture of the two guys, all buffed-up so they look like Fabio. It's really, really funny! My house is especially freaky because it's got comic books everywhere and little play figurines of comic book characters, and you know, just pizza boxes and stuff like that. You can see the posters – sometimes they'll just pan past one. I'm in my house more than I'm anywhere else, and it's pretty extensive – there's a huge kitchen and a living room and a staircase. Oh, and a guitar in the corner… And a bar area we haven't really gone to yet.

Chuck's actually playing a part in the story now, so will he ever end up on a book cover himself?

That's a great idea! He's probably shy about putting his face out there, but it's a great idea. They could really do him up and make him look really good – long, flowing hair… *[Laughs]*

How do you feel about his wardrobe?

He's kind of like the Little Lebowski!



So what's it like working on the show after having been in so many episodes?
It's so much fun. I mean, from the beginning they were great to me, but now it's like they're all friends and I get to see them when I go up. I can't say enough good things about Jared and Jensen, they're just really good guys, they're from Texas – they're like those normal, Americana, good-hearted fellas. I think there's something really good that happens because they shoot the show in Vancouver.

"IT'S ALMOST LIKE THE WINCHESTERS REAL-LIFE STORY IS THE GLUE THAT'S HOLDING CHUCK TOGETHER!"

Shooting a show here in LA you can get caught up in the glamour aspect and going out, but up there they're kind of removed, they're focused on the show. They're just really good, sincere guys, you know? They joke around a lot – Jared especially is a big joker. Like I said, my first reaction was, "Wow, they're large. They're laaaarge men!" My first day there, they were talking about some UFC (ultimate fighting championship) and I was all freaked out and they were like, "You watch fighting?" and I said [*puts on scared little voice*] "I don't. I don't watch fighting so much…" But then they turned out to be big teddy bear guys. They really are the sweetest guys.

A prophet is a pretty handy guy to have around for Sam and Dean too.
Exactly! I'm just glad I'm on the good side, you know?

So you prefer to play good guys?
Villains are a pretty yummy thing to play, but in the past I've played jerks or sleazy guys, so it's fun to play the quirky character who's generally liked.

What was your favorite line you've been given in *Supernatural* so far?
I can't believe I got to say, "This sucks ass." I think in the first episode I said, "That's M. Night-level douchiness." That was fun! You get away with saying that because you're hiding behind this character – it's not Rob saying it.

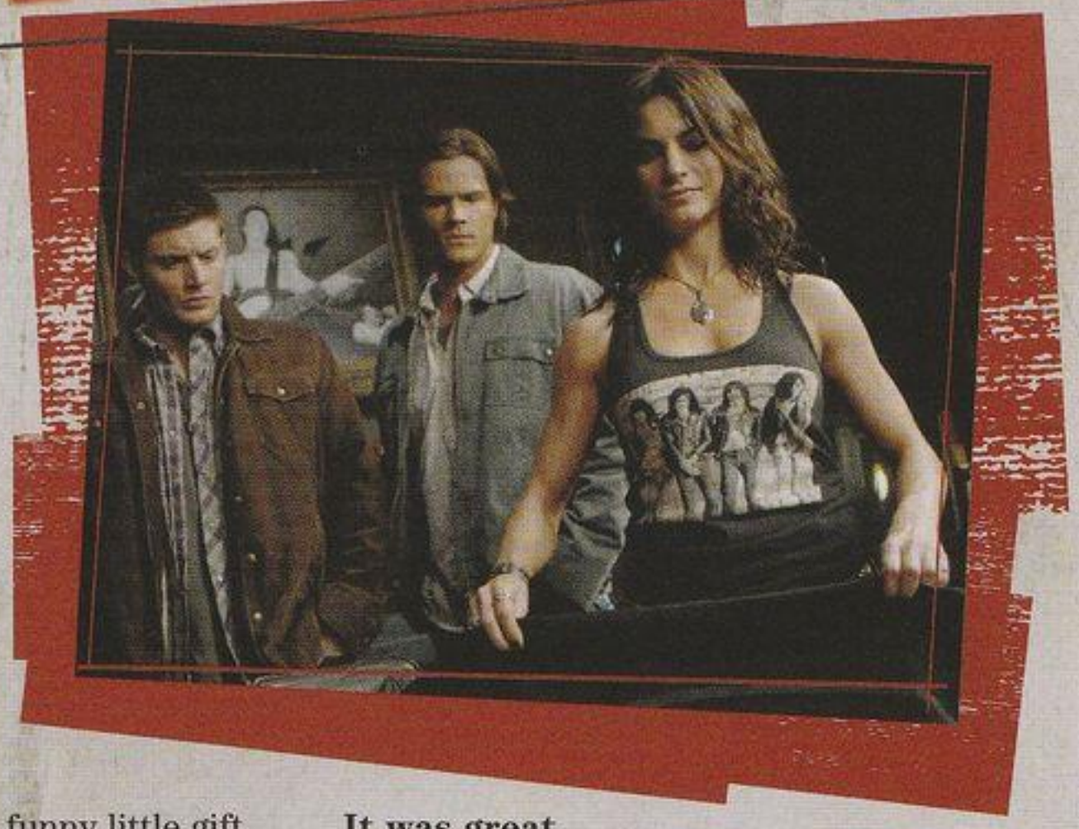
In *Lucifer Rising* we saw Chuck would arrange for some female company on his last night. If it was the night before the Apocalypse, what would *you* do?
I have a family, I have two small kids. I can imagine that in real life I'd take them out and have as much ice cream as we can and do something really awesome like that. Go up to the top of a mountain. It would be a good place to watch it all go down...

Tell us about your band, Louden Swain! How are things going with them?
We've been playing together for about 10 years. We've got a growing fanbase, really through the internet. It started as an extra-curricular thing, because acting's my main focus and it still is. But the band has really gotten better and I'm really proud of it.

Do you think your fanbase has grown a lot since *Supernatural*?
It's definitely helped a lot, for me as an actor and for the band. The more people who know about me and about us… And those fans are so supportive. You get a role on the show and it's like, "Okay, you're in the family now. Protected!" Chuck's definitely coming back.

Words: Nicholas Knight

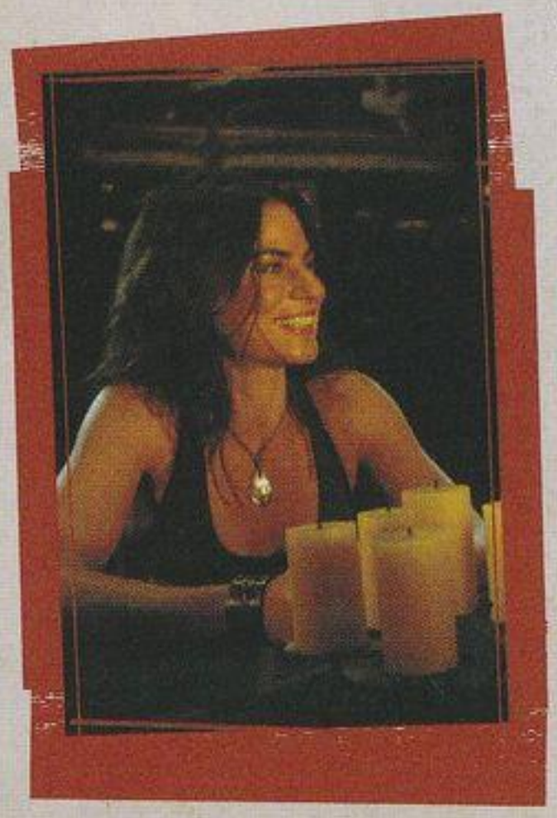
DEJA VIEW
TRACI DINWIDDIE



Traci Dinwiddie's *Supernatural* character, Pamela Barnes, grabbed the camera and held viewers rapt, shocking them from the start with her bold personality and horrifying loss of eyesight right through to her untimely death. But the character's most surprising twist yet came when she turned up in Heaven, grudge-free and rockin' some healed eyeballs. And she had one more surprise in store for Dean, which the actress discussed with us, along with a couple of potential future story arcs for Pamela...

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: How did you react when you found out that they were bringing Pamela back on *Supernatural*?**

Traci Dinwiddie: I was thrilled! Right away I wanted to know, "Will I get to work with Jim Beaver?" Jim and I are great pals and we really haven't gotten a lot of screen time together, which is too bad because we have such good chemistry as Bobby and Pamela. I'm looking on Twitter right now – I put a message out that I'd be doing this interview – and I asked them if they had any questions, and one of the main questions that keep coming up is: "I wonder how Bobby and Pamela got to know each other?" All of them want to know more about Pam and Bobby, and I do too! I would love to go back on the show and do something with that.



If Pam and Bobby had a romantic relationship in the past, it'd be interesting to see how Bobby would react to Pam kissing Dean... How did *you* react to kissing Jensen Ackles?

Kissing Jensen was surreal! I didn't expect that, so I was shocked when I read it. I love getting the scripts; it's like my birthday every time I get a script at my doorstep. I just have no idea what's going to be in there. But, wow, what a funny little gift, to be smooching Jensen. The script even said, "Long, deep French kiss." And I was like, "Oh my goodness!" I remember getting all flushed about the idea, like, "I have to kiss this [man who's] perceived [as a] god by the fans?" My next thought was, "The fans are going to hate me!" But I think they probably got a kick out of the fact that Pamela finally takes her chance in Heaven. She can do anything she wants to in Heaven, so of course she's going to lay one on him. In one of the rehearsals, right before the smooch, I said to Jensen, "I'd rather be smooching your [on-screen] daddy [Jeffrey Dean Morgan], but you'll do for now." And he said, "Well, yes, he is a bigger celebrity than I am." Then we kissed. It was hilarious!

This isn't the first time you've expressed interest in Jeffrey Dean Morgan. Now that Pamela's up in Heaven, perhaps she could have a story arc where she uses her psychic powers to track down John Winchester.

I would love that – my cheeks are cramping from smiling over that one! I've definitely not been shy about my little crush, so if Jeffrey Dean Morgan comes back on the show, they better make sure Pamela Barnes has something to do with it!

It was great that Pamela ended up in Heaven, but as an actress, would you rather have liked to come back as a ghost or demon or something?

I would love to switch gears and go into the darker realm. I think going to Heaven is a nice turn for the show, but as an actress, I'd love something meaty. That would be exciting.

Pam receives messages from beyond, but have the fans sent you any "out there" questions or comments?

No, my tweetlebugs (that's what I call my Twitter fans) are great. I really have to give props to them – sometimes they're the last people I speak to before I go to sleep at night. I'll say "sweet dreams" to them on Twitter and then I'll hear back from tons of them with good wishes for fine dreams and a beautiful next day. It's like being blessed with a whole other family.

One thing about the fans, though, is that they want spoilers left and right. I hadn't mentioned to them that I would be returning to *Supernatural* in *Dark Side of the Moon*, but somebody found out and put it all over the place online. I was so ticked because I wanted it to be a special present for those who really dig the character, but the cat got out of the bag.

Any final messages for the readers?

Don't read spoilers, they'll burn your eyes out!

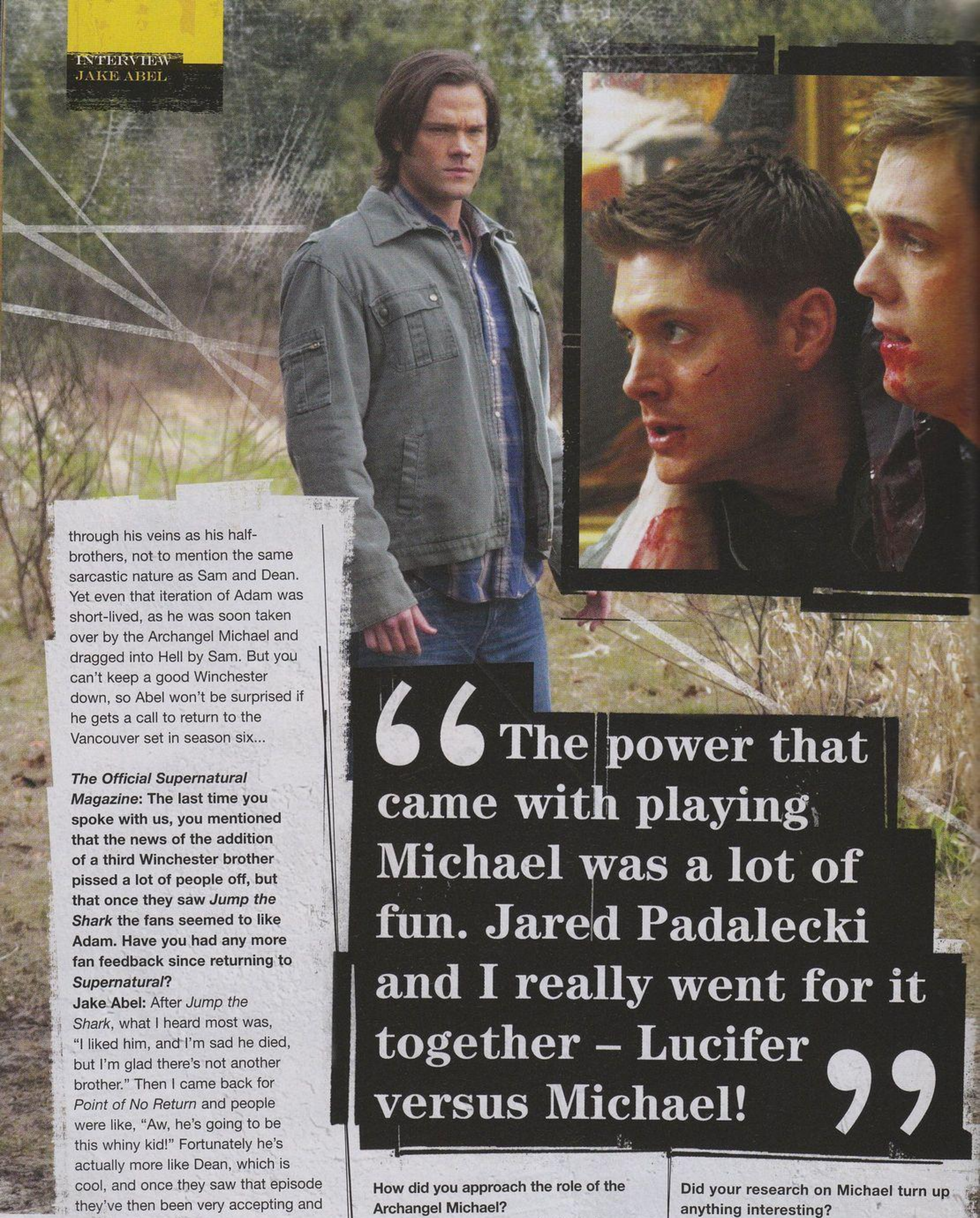
INTERVIEW
JAKE ABEL

Ad'am's

Adam Milligan has been seen on screen in more incarnations than most characters, whether as a ghoul, a corpse, his recently resurrected real self, or the vessel for the Archangel Michael. *The Official Supernatural Magazine* caught up with actor Jake Abel to discuss his multi-faceted character...

As the potentially shark-jumping third Winchester brother, the introduction of Jake Abel's *Supernatural* character Adam Milligan garnered a lot of fan attention... for a dead guy. *Supernatural*'s writers are notorious for killing off great guest stars, but Abel didn't even get a chance to play the *real* Adam, unless you count his turn as Adam's chewed-up corpse – but even then, he didn't get to play Zombie Adam or Ghost Adam or anything like that. He did, of course, play Ghoul Adam, but as Abel explains to *The Official Supernatural Magazine*, that was just the ghoul's flawed interpretation of what Adam was like. Fortunately, Abel got to return to the series in its 100th episode, *Point of No Return*, and show us how his character truly did have the same Winchester blood pumping

Words:
Nicholas
Knight



through his veins as his half-brothers, not to mention the same sarcastic nature as Sam and Dean. Yet even that iteration of Adam was short-lived, as he was soon taken over by the Archangel Michael and dragged into Hell by Sam. But you can't keep a good Winchester down, so Abel won't be surprised if he gets a call to return to the Vancouver set in season six...

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: The last time you spoke with us, you mentioned that the news of the addition of a third Winchester brother pissed a lot of people off, but that once they saw *Jump the Shark* the fans seemed to like Adam. Have you had any more fan feedback since returning to *Supernatural*?**

Jake Abel: After *Jump the Shark*, what I heard most was, "I liked him, and I'm sad he died, but I'm glad there's not another brother." Then I came back for *Point of No Return* and people were like, "Aw, he's going to be this whiny kid!" Fortunately he's actually more like Dean, which is cool, and once they saw that episode they've then been very accepting and gracious toward me.

In *Swan Song*, while still technically playing the meatsuit Adam, you were essentially a totally different character.

> **"The power that came with playing Michael was a lot of fun. Jared Padalecki and I really went for it together – Lucifer versus Michael!"**

How did you approach the role of the Archangel Michael?

It was a bit blasphemous, but not. It was this weird thing: How do you play Michael? How *do* you play an archangel? It was very, very interesting to me. I talked to [director and executive producer] Phil Sgriccia a little bit about it and I did some research.

Did your research on Michael turn up anything interesting?

It was just the history of the angels, and it was hard to find what I was actually looking for. I mean, it's a lot of opinions and a lot of folklore, and people change the story, and I'm like, "Whoa, whoa, no,

no, no, I want the basic facts of what an archangel is!" So I learned the history of Michael and his relationship with Lucifer, and why Lucifer was sent to Earth. It was about understanding why Lucifer became Lucifer, the evil being that he's perceived to be, and why Michael is the good son. There was a lot of stuff, too, so I was like, "Bah, I'm going to forget everything... " Ultimately, I kind of just found the character on the day [of filming]. The power that came with playing Michael was a lot of fun. Jared Padalecki and I really went for it together – Lucifer versus Michael! It was really nice.

That face-off with Jared's Lucifer had a real western movie showdown feel to it, with hints of Sergio Leone's "spaghetti western" style. Are you a fan of the genre?

Yeah, absolutely. I'm a big John Ford fan, so it's something I've always been interested in. It was really great that it had that feel. It's out in the middle of nowhere by a graveyard, and we had to circle each other like in a western, so it was a blast. I think they did an amazing job at capturing that homage.

Which of your *Supernatural* characters did you like playing the best – Adam, the ghoul, or Michael?

It's hard to choose! I was playing three different people, really, and each had their own perks. Every version of Adam was just so different, and they were each enjoyable in their own way.

Having played two supernatural creatures on TV, what are your feelings on the existence of the real supernatural?

I think there are things that can happen... When I was growing up, my grandma had a house that my family believes is haunted. I was a child, so I think I was really just oblivious to it, but my whole family will attest that some really freaky stuff happened throughout a span of about 10 years when they lived in this farmhouse in Ohio. I trust my family and they experienced some stuff, so I'm sure there's gotta be something to it.

If angels *did* exist, and one wanted to use you as a vessel like Michael did Adam, would you say yes?

That's the thing about this show, they make angels almost bad and it's a bit odd. So I want to say, "Yeah," but I'm sure when you're actually in the scenario you don't really know what's going on. It could be a fallen angel. It could be someone like Lucifer deceiving you! It's tricky, so I don't know what I'd say.

Speaking of things you don't know, when you shot *Jump the Shark*, did you have any idea that you'd be coming back for more episodes?

No, no, not at all. I mean, I knew the possibility was there, even though I died, because it's *Supernatural* and they can do whatever they want, and I had such a great time with them that I was really hoping that I could go back, but it was a great surprise that I got two more episodes.

What was it like returning to the show for *Point of No Return*?

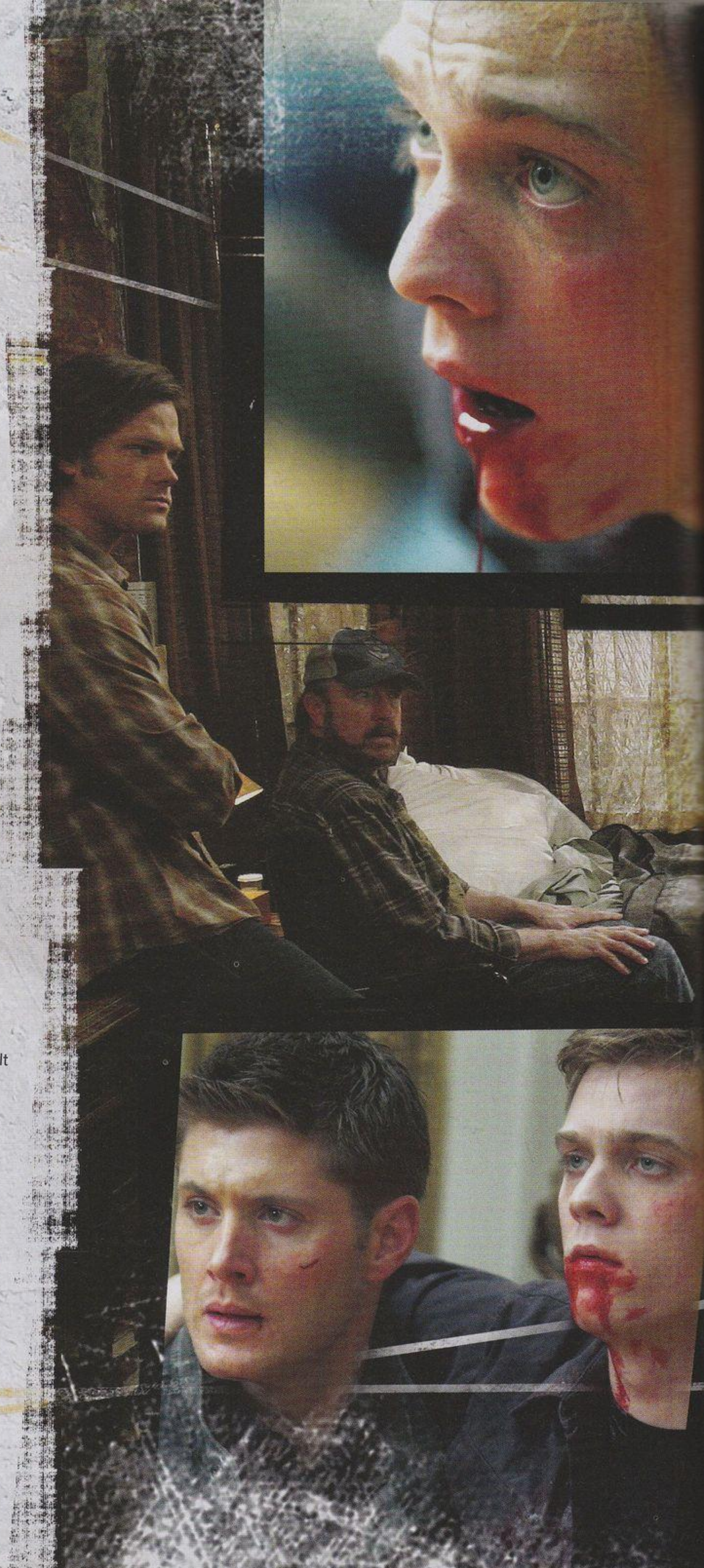
Something really positive about that episode was working with Kurt Fuller. He's unbelievable. I knew his work because he's in everything. He can make exposition *dance*. He's brilliant, and working with him made it really interesting. I had a blast.

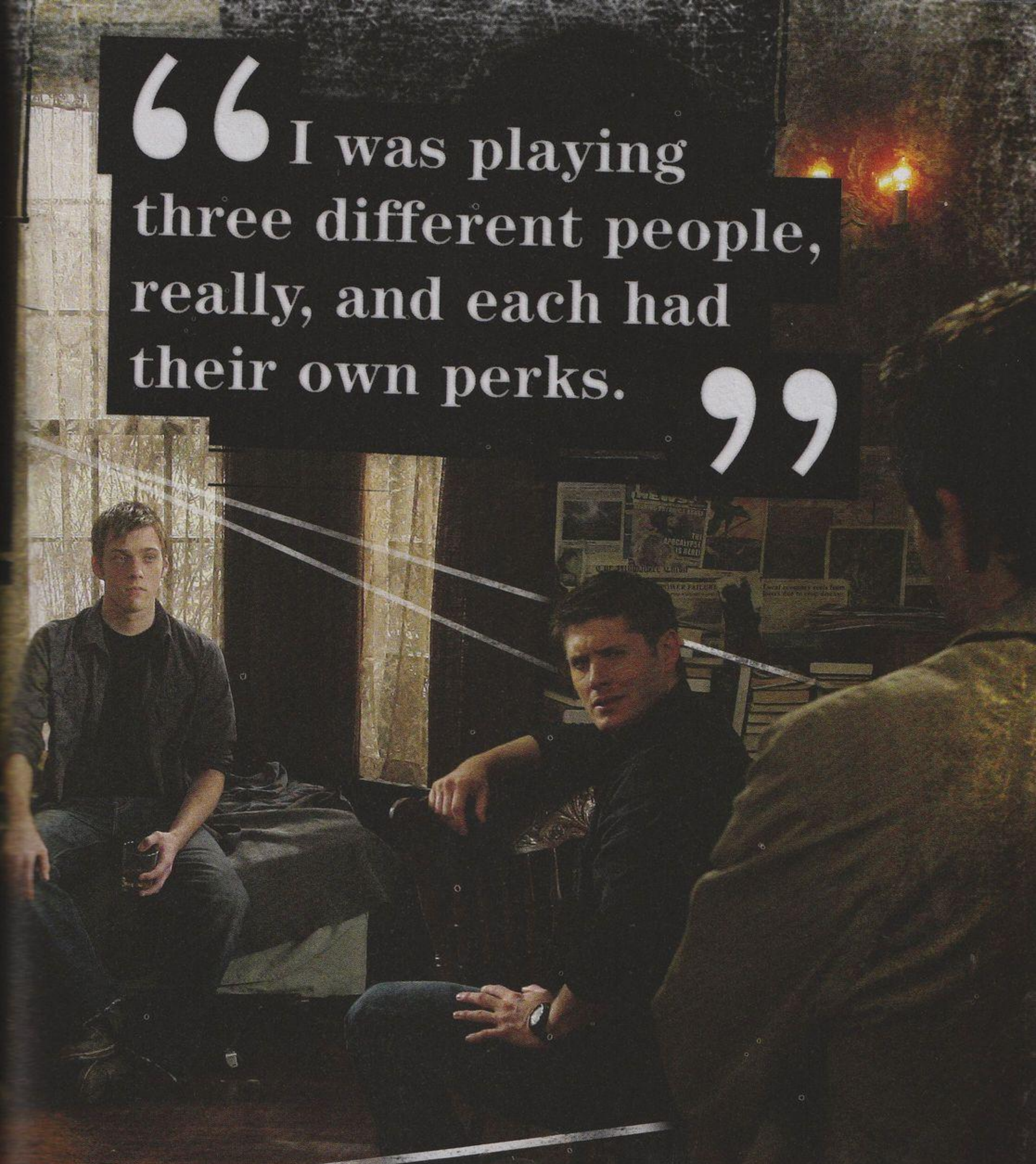
Do you have a favorite line of dialogue from your episodes?
It's not even my line, but in *Point of No Return* where they've cleaned me up and we're talking about saving the world and Dean's like, "We're working on the power of love." And Adam's like, "How's that going for you?" And he's like, "Not good." That's my favorite line, and it's not even mine!

What fun behind-the-scenes stories do you have from working on *Supernatural*?
There's a great bit about the Impala at the opening of *Swan Song* with the car's creation being filmed. I found out from the guys at ADR [automated dialogue replacement] that there's a theory that Eric Kripke controls all. For example, did you know he controls the weather? Yeah. He'll write things in the script like, "There are two clouds in the sky," and then they'll go to film and there'll be *two clouds in the sky*. It's actually pretty creepy! So when Kripke wrote that whole opening thing about the assembly of the Impala, he just had this idea of what he wanted, but then it turned out for the crew researching it that there was some actual footage of the Impala being built on an assembly line.

> Apparently, though, it's really rare that they ever had footage of cars being built at that time, but they had the Impala, the same style and make and everything, being built. It was this super creepy moment for the crew when they were like, "How on Earth...?"

Going in the opposite direction of super creepy to super funny, was it hard keeping a straight face when Misha Collins called you "Ass-butt"?
No, but there's something from that scene that's gonna be in the gag reel that was awful for me but that's pretty





"I was playing three different people, really, and each had their own perks."

hilarious. The Molotov cocktail would not break! It was hitting me everywhere. At one point, Misha threw the bottle and hit me in the shin, and I was like, "This is not good." The bottle just would not break. It was made of sugar glass, which usually is single-paned, but because Misha had to throw it, they double-paned it. The single pane, if you hold it in your hand, will just crush. After the bottle wouldn't break on me, Jared just gave me it and said, "Here, man, destroy it." I held it for a second and it *exploded* in my hand.

So how did you work around the problem?
They put hard pads on my chest and they had Lou Bollo, the stunt coordinator, stand as close to me as he could without being in frame and just toss it and toss it and toss it until it hit the pads just right and shattered. So it ended up working, but it was an ordeal.

That whole effect, including you bursting into flames and vanishing, turned out great. As did your final scene, where you and Jared Padalecki fell into the black hole leading to Lucifer's cage. How did they pull off that effect of you falling into Hell?
For me, I was just falling into a big green pit. I had no idea how that was going to look, but I was sure they would make it look amazing. And they did!

So, is Adam stuck in Hell? Sam got out pretty fast – did he take his brother with him? In other words, will you be returning to *Supernatural* in season six?
I haven't heard anything at all yet. Nothing. As far as I'm concerned, I'm gone. But then again, you never know, anything can happen. I'd probably have to play Adam a different way again. Maybe I'll come back as a dinosaur or something crazy.

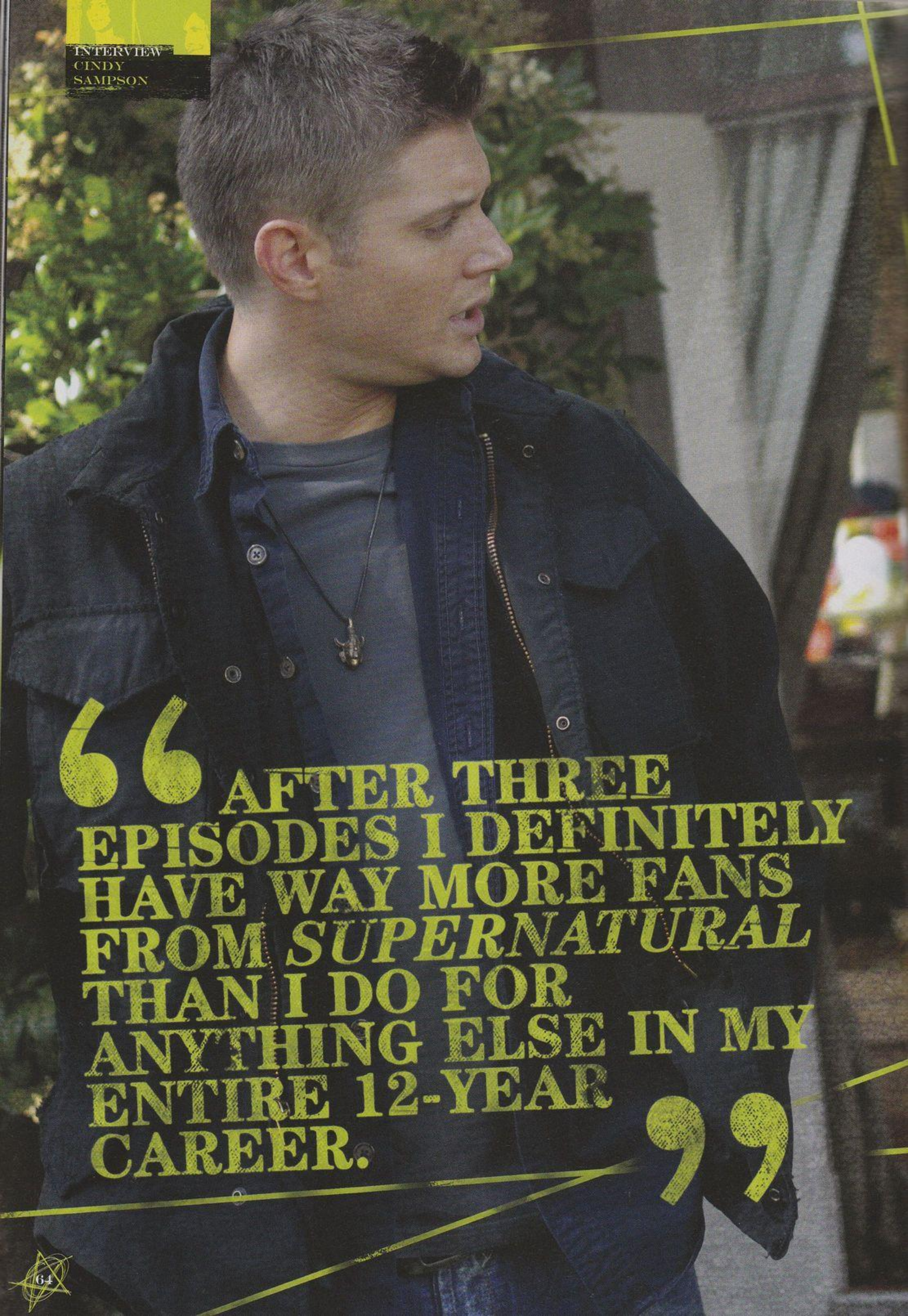
If you did come back in season six, and you got to actually just play the real Adam, who'd been resurrected, do you think there's any chance that you'd be riding around in the Impala? Sitting in the backseat? And if so, how do you think the fans would react?
[The producers] will be the ultimate deciders of that. But even so, I think that's something that I would have to ask the fans' permission for first!

"I came back for *Point of No Return* and people were like, 'Aw, he's going to be this whiny kid!' Fortunately, he's actually more like Dean."

Words: Nicholas Knight

Many women have passed through the life of Dean Winchester, but one seems to have had a lasting effect. It was Lisa Braeden whom Dean sought to protect from the Apocalypse, and who he turned to when Sam was seemingly killed. As she prepares for season six, actress Cindy Sampson told us about playing this memorable lady...

Dean Girl



INTERVIEW
CINDY
SAMPSON

66 AFTER THREE EPISODES I DEFINITELY HAVE WAY MORE FANS FROM *SUPERNATURAL* THAN I DO FOR ANYTHING ELSE IN MY ENTIRE 12-YEAR CAREER. 99

Dean Winchester has never been a settling down type of guy, yet something about Lisa Braeden and her son Ben made him question that stance. So much so that when he was considering martyring himself at the end of *99 Problems*, he made a point of saying goodbye to Lisa first. Then when the Apocalypse was finally averted and he was mourning the loss of his brother, he went straight to Lisa. But this storyline would not have worked, would not have even progressed past *The Kids Are Alright*, if it wasn't for Cindy Sampson making Lisa someone who we could believe Dean wouldn't be able to get out of his mind. And we're not talking about the "Gumby Girl" thing, either, although Sampson *does* practice yoga...

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: When Dean first hooked up with Lisa, she was a yoga instructor – do you practice yoga by any chance?**

Cindy Sampson: I actually *do* practice yoga, which is funny. That's just one of those coincidental things. I was a dancer for a really long time, too; I went to a school in Toronto called Randolph Academy for the Performing Arts. I still take dance classes, pilates, and yoga. I'm pretty active, so playing a yoga instructor didn't scare me all that much.

Do any *Supernatural* fans refer to you as Gumby Girl?

Yeah, but I don't know if I like that one... There's even a fan site called Gumby Girl! [http://littlewinchester.org/lisa]

Have you had much fan response about the character?

Strangely, yes. I really only did one full episode of *Supernatural* and the second one was a tiny 30-second cameo [in *Dream a Little Dream of Me*]. So after three episodes I definitely have way more fans from *Supernatural* than I do for anything else in my entire 12-year career. It just goes to show you the power of *Supernatural*.

Speaking of your career, your early credits include *Sketch Troop* – were your initial leanings toward comedy?

Yeah, that's what I used to do. Comedy was my safety zone, and I always thought that's what I wanted to do. I used to be in a sketch comedy group and we did the *Just for Laughs* festivals and I always thought that was my calling, and then somehow I got into this scream queen genre with horror movies and sci-fi stuff.

Are there any new horror movies of yours that *Supernatural* fans should watch out for?

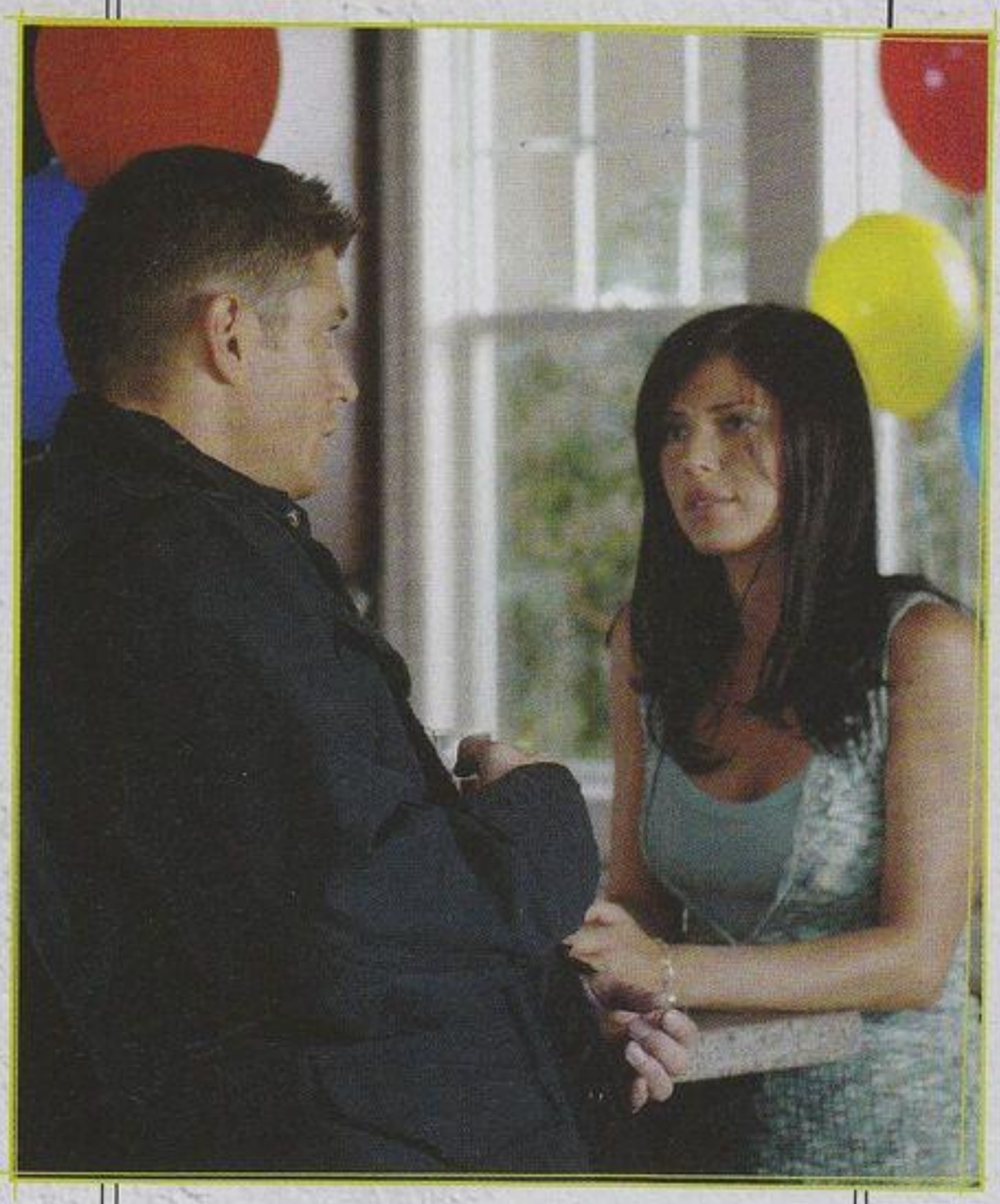
I did a horror movie called *The Shrine* last year,. It was awesome – I got to do some things I've never gotten to do before in my career. But the neatest part about working in horror is I'm a big fan of the genre. When I switched over into it, I was like, 'What the hell am I doing?' But now it's just second nature. It's really where I've been living in my career for the past little while.

As a fan of the genre, were you excited to land a part on *Supernatural*?
Oh my gosh, yes! I watched *Supernatural* before I ever was a part of it, so I was excited in my own right, but my friends just lost it. And not just them. I'm from Halifax, Nova Scotia, and my parents have friends that watch the show all the time. *Supernatural* has a wide audience.

Why do you think Lisa has been so embraced by the fans?
In that first episode, *The Kids Are Alright*, everyone seemed to like Lisa, and I think that's because she was strong, she wasn't all googly-eyed over Dean. She was at the point in everyone's life where they realize there's so much more out there going on than just partying. Not to mention the turning point for her was obviously having a child, because you put your child before your needs and wants in life. She had cemented herself into her life and her family. All the craziness that went on in that episode didn't really shake her as much as it probably would have otherwise, because she had a solid grasp on her life.

Executive producer Phil Sgriccia told us the kiss at the end of that episode was unscripted, so how did you react when he asked you to kiss Jensen?
They played jokes on me the whole time! Phil would be like, "Okay, this time when Jensen comes to the door and says, 'Wow, you look great,' you say, 'You look old,' just to mess with his head." So Jensen stood at the door and he was like, "Wow, Lisa, you look great." And I was like, "Really? You look...*old*!" And I swear Jensen didn't laugh at all when we did the take. I was like, 'Okay, pro. Show off!" Then Phil asked me to kiss him and I'm like, "Are you serious?" And he went, "Yeah." But I still thought Phil was joking, and he was like, "No, seriously." So I'm like, "Okay." But they didn't tell Jensen. This was my first episode with the cast and crew that all know each other very well, so I was like, great. But Jensen didn't even blink an eye.

Since Phil had you unexpectedly kiss Jensen, did he also have you unexpectedly *slap* Jensen in the scene where you're yelling at him (after he gives Ben questionable advice)?
No. It's funny because that was my first day of shooting, and I shook hands with Jensen probably two minutes before we started shooting that scene. So it was like, "Hi, nice to meet you." Then, "Action! Go be mad at him." There might have been talk of a slap, actually – it was a long time ago – but I think that would've come across as too abrasive, too violent. The irony! Too violent for *Supernatural*...



What's your favorite scene from *The Kids Are Alright*?
Yelling at Jensen was fun. But my favorite was just before the end, when Dean brings Ben back. I thought that was the most touching scene. It was a softer side of Dean, and I got to be a part of it.

Do you think Lisa was lying to Dean about Ben? Is Ben really Dean's kid?
I think the neat part about that whole situation is people have speculated about both sides, but no one has ever actually said yes or no. I believe that might be explored in season six, because the powers-that-be have alluded to the fact that Ben might be his.

What did you think of the changeling version of Ben?
That was so cool, because on the day when we were filming in my house, and I looked at the top of the coffee table, I just saw his face so seeing the finished product was amazing. I really liked that episode, and I thought the effects were kick-ass.

Did it surprise you to get a call for *Supernatural* for *Point of No Return* after two years had past?
To get a call out of the blue was awesome. The interesting thing about going back is that Lisa had not seen Dean in two years, so there was some reality going on there, and it wasn't that difficult to get back into the swing of things because I hadn't been around, either. It was true to life.

You worked with Phil Sgriccia again in *Point of No Return* [although the scene aired as part of *99 Problems*, which was directed by Charles Beeson] — do you have anything to share about working with Phil?
Without sounding like a brown-noser? Probably not. He's the best! Really, the best. This has been a good year for me being back on that show because I have a great time. They have an excellent show and material, and everyone has fun doing it. I don't think it gets much better than that.

When you were working on *Point of No Return*, did you know you'd return for *Swan Song*?
I didn't know at all, but I did have an inkling that I might be. Dean says he's going to have me and Ben taken care of, so I had a feeling I'd be back so they can have some closure, explain to everyone what happened, where I am, et cetera. They're fun people to work with, so I was very happy and excited to go back.

Okay, so the Apocalypse has been stopped and Dean's now with Lisa. How long do you think that relationship will last, given Dean's lifestyle as a hunter?
Gosh, I'm not sure about that. I'm sure we definitely have a solid, tangible relationship, that's going to be an actual, viable relationship. I lived so many years without him as it is, so I think that he'll probably come back to check in with me throughout the season, but I can't see my character being more than the home base.

Will Dean get Lisa killed, or do you think you'll break up with him, or do you think you'll get married in the series finale, whenever that is?
All I see for Dean and Lisa is death and dismemberment! I certainly hope we get married, I really do, but all I see are bad things brewing for them!

INTERVIEW
KIM
RHODES

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL SHERIFF

Having seen her husband being eaten alive and shooting her zombie son, it's safe to say Sheriff Jody Mills has had her worldview changed by her association with Bobby, Sam, and Dean.

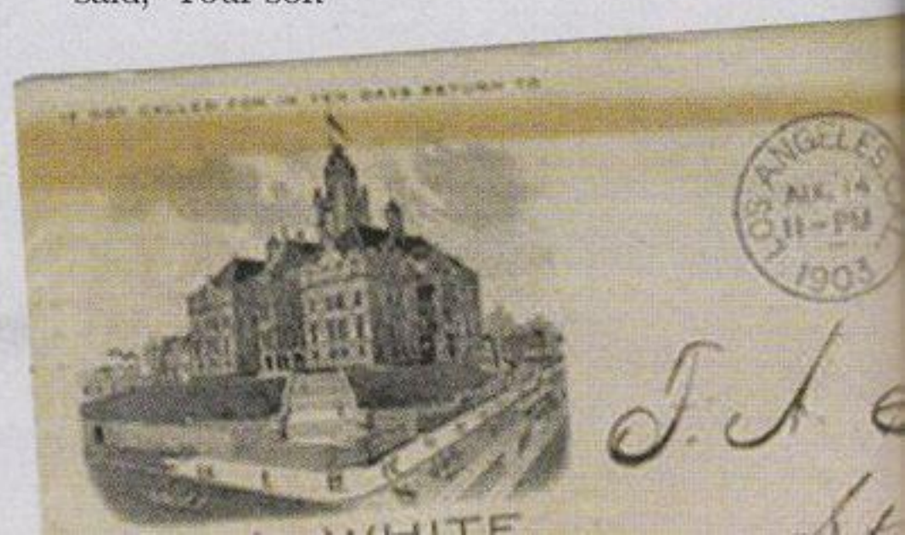
We met actress Kim Rhodes to talk about playing this tough lady… Words: Bryan Cairns

The Official Supernatural Magazine: Were you aware of _Supernatural_ before being cast as Sheriff Mills?

Kim Rhodes: I was very aware of *Supernatural*. Very. I had a little bit of a crush on both boys! I have to preface this by saying I know sci-fi fans have a very specific reputation, but they come in all shapes, sizes, and walks of life. My sister and her husband are both semi-pro cyclists. She's a biogenetic researcher with a post grad doctorate from Harvard, and they both obsess over *Supernatural*. So when I heard I was going to be on it, the first thing I did was call them and go "Guess what I get to do?" I love science-fiction and the genre. The sad thing is I'm also easily frightened, so I can't actually go watch them in the movies because there's too much scary, blood, brains, and zombie stuff, but *Supernatural* has just the right amount. I can enjoy it and still sleep at night.

Most people probably recognize you as the mom from the family series _The Suite Life of Zack and Cody_. Did you jump at the chance to do something darker than your previous work?

Yes! Are you kidding me? The second they said, "Your son



eats your husband's guts and ends up having his brains blown out…." I was like "I have a gun? I'm in! Sign me up!"

If you had to profile Mills, how would you describe her?

She's someone who's very proud of the fact that she's good at her job. Her job comes first in her life, especially now with the unfortunate incident with the kid needing his head blown off. Now her job definitely comes first. She finds comfort in the rules. Mills isn't the kind of person who likes moral ambiguity. She likes black and white and knowing what side she falls on, which is why the present circumstances are so frustrating for her. What her heart tells her is right isn't what the world is telling Mills.

Ultimately, how did her son's predicament flesh that out and add another layer to Sheriff Mills?

Well, there's no rage like the rage of a mother. You talk about a momma bear or moms lifting a car [in times of emergency], and they wrote Mills so well [in that respect]. It's one of the best-written characters I've ever gotten to play, even though it's a guest-starring role. She has this beautiful, agonizing emotional experience. Her entire world falls apart, but because of who she is, the kind of mindset she has about her job, and going back to the rules, Mills broke down, fell apart, and then went "Alright! We have to get people to safety and the zombies destroyed," and went after them with a vengeance! Honestly though, if that's what had to happen, she would have done it whether or not her son turned. It just made her realize that what she wanted to believe wasn't exactly the best.

These days, zombies seem to be everywhere. Why are they so creepy, do you think?

I think we all have our personal ideas about what dead is, but no matter what those theories are, you can't know for sure. A zombie speaks to that tiny little part of our brain that tells us there's a monster under our bed and you shouldn't be dangling your feet there. Zombies are terrifying even when they're nice because they're dead and you can't know for sure what they're really like. That, and the brain-eating thing.

Despite everything that went down, were you thrilled Mills got to kick some walking dead ass alongside Sam at the end?

Yes! That was such a vindication! Also, this is when I go on my political soapbox – I love the fact they allowed her the emotion of a mother, but ultimately she went in with the men to kick butt! Again, that was so well written. I love that her response was "I'm going to do my job!"

Were you gun savvy before locking and loading in that scene?

No. I was handgun savvy, but I had never fired a shotgun. One of the things I asked was that the weapons trainer come in a little early, because one of my pet peeves is girls who don't look like they can handle a gun. I hate it! Go practice!
So we went in the stage next to where we were shooting. They let me fire a bunch of blanks so that I would not be surprised by it. I wanted to know how hard it would kick, how it would feel, and how loud it was going to be. It was important to get it right.

"Mills isn't the kind of person who likes moral ambiguity. She likes black and white and knowing what side she falls on."

A lot of guest stars come and go. How shocked were you to get the call about season six's *Weekend at Bobby's*?

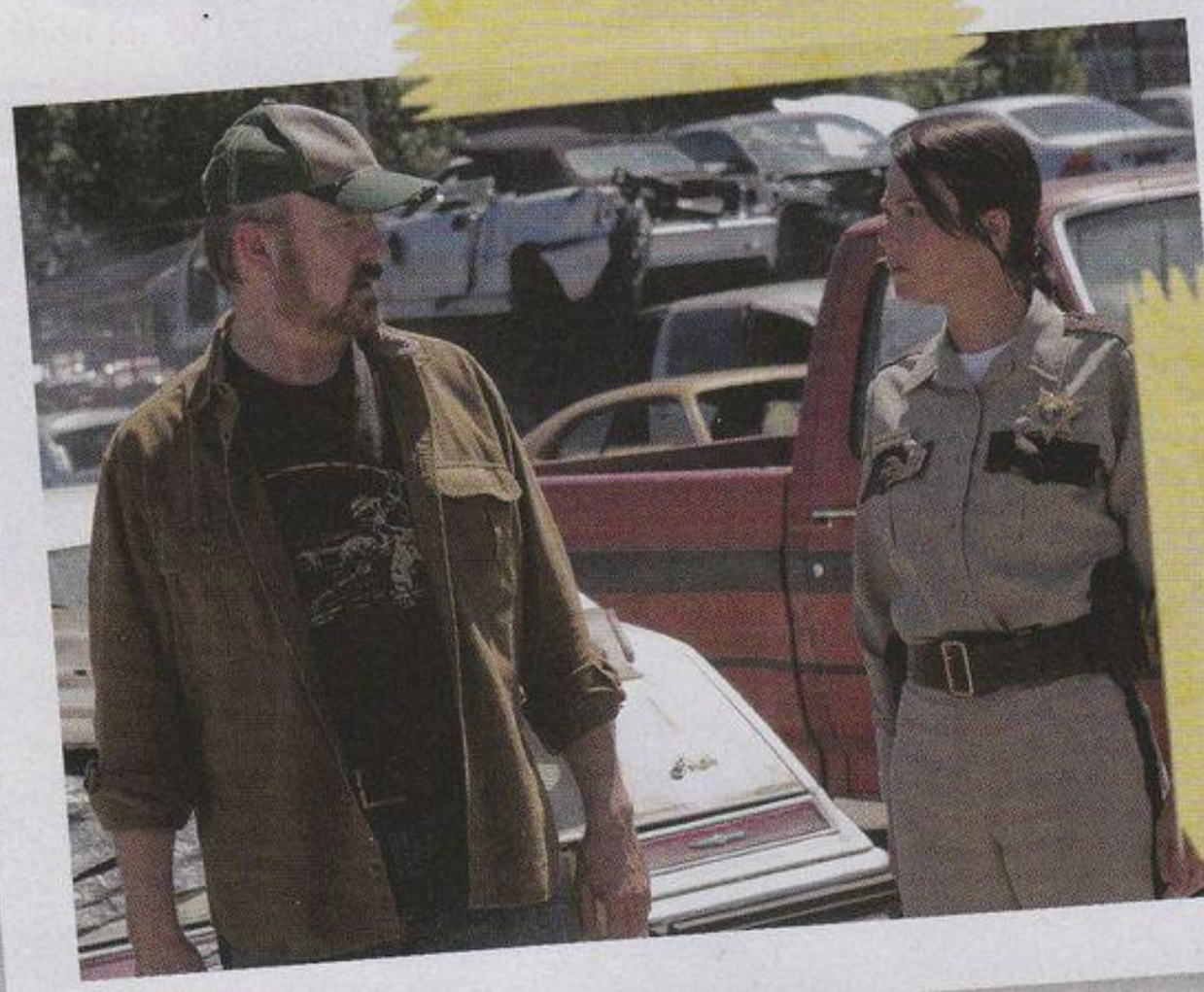
I cried a little bit, I was so happy. I was very surprised, though. I had crossed my fingers. Everybody, of course, said, "Well you're not dead, and on this show that means you can always come back!" But I was wondering why they would need me and what purpose I could possibly serve? In my own heart of hearts, I was hoping. I was so happy while I was there, and it's such a great character. It was like being told Christmas was going to come again.

What brings Mills back to the fold, and how will the episode expand on her and Bobby's relationship?

Interesting you should ask that. This challenges her relationship with Bobby and surprises her enough that Mills breaks the rules. In the way we created the arc, she doesn't simply go "Oh, I really like you, so I'll do anything you say." Mills does it gritting her teeth and hating that she's doing it. Mills knows that she's right and honestly cares about this man, so she ends up coming through for him even though it cost her everything she thought was important to her.

Do you see something more than just friendship developing between them, like a romance?

I would *love* that! As a fan, I think Bobby needs a girlfriend who can handle her own gun! They always die, and I would like to think he could find romance with a girl that would actually have his back and support him in his endeavors instead of stopping him. Bobby has been heartbroken too many times. As a viewer, I'd love to see him with a chick that could actually save his butt every once in a while. Personally, I love Jim Beaver. I would do anything they wanted me to with him. For the character, she needs to lighten up a bit. She's done everything by the book all her life and Jody Mills would be well served to get together with somebody who's like "Really? You thought you had it all figured out? Let me show you something."



Were there any scenes from your two appearances that stand out for you?

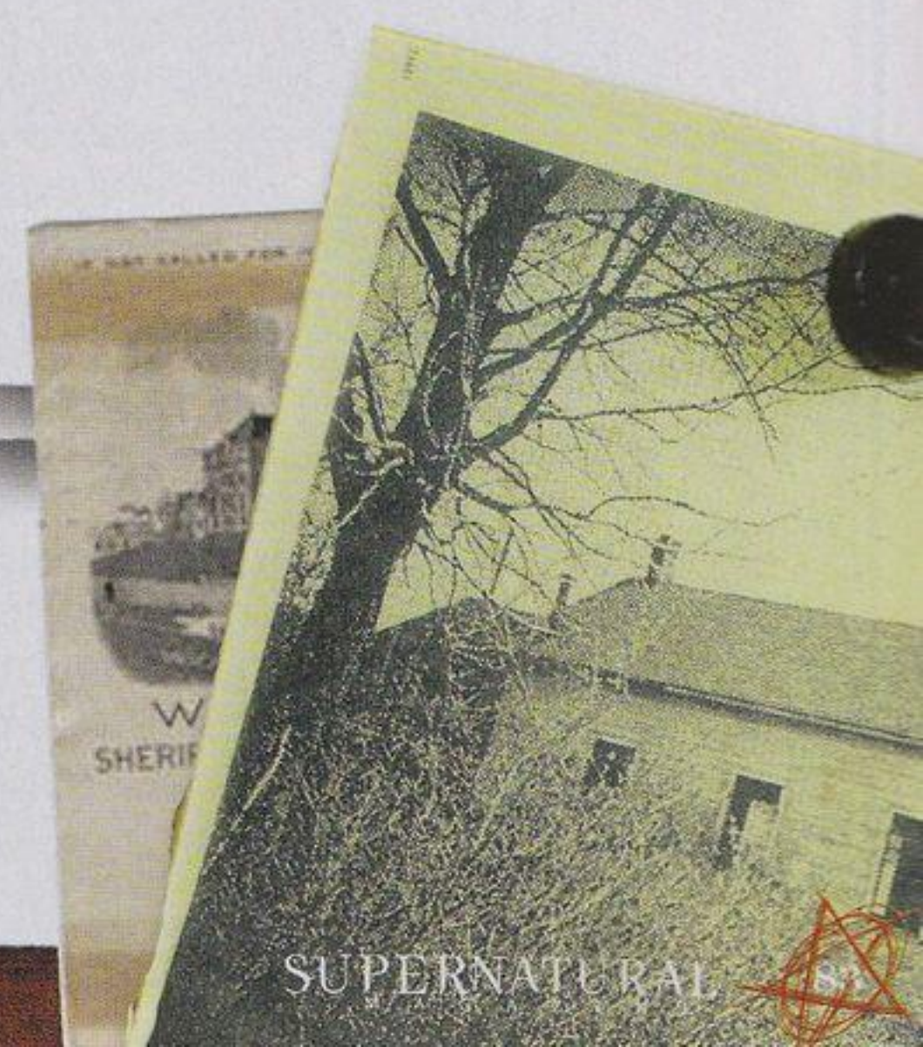
I loved the scene where the shotgun comes from my face. Just the way they set that up, I felt it captured a woman with a lot going on. Then there's a moment in the second episode when Bobby goes "Thank you," and my response is "If I lose my job, I'm taking it out on your ass!" Right before that comment, I made an 'actor schmactor' choice, Jim noticed it, and responded to it. For a second, you think Mills is going to melt, you really see the sweetness, and maybe a little beyond a professional respect for Bobby. Then the tough demeanor sets back in, she threatens to kicks his butt, and walks away. I loved the fact Jim was willing to play with me.

Have we seen the last of Mills? Did the producers give you any indication?

I've had no discussions. If they called in 30 seconds and asked me to be there in 10 minutes, I would find a way to get my kid shoved in an overnight bag. I mean this quite literally: *Supernatural* is in the top three places I've ever been happy working in my life, and that includes places I've been contract on. The crew and set are great. The character is wonderful, so if they wanted to bring me back, I make no bones about it!

They filmed these episodes out of order this season, so how did Jensen Ackles do in his directorial debut?

There's a moment when Jensen came up and spoke to both Jim and I. Jim looked at me and said, "I love having a good actor who is also a good director, because he doesn't let you get away with anything." Jensen was on point across the board, and he added to it. There's a lot of moments directors don't usually catch with me, which is when "I'm just going to say this line really fast so we can get to the next one because I don't know what this moment is about. I'm just going to invest it with something and hope nobody notices." Jensen called me out in every single moment, and he did it not only lovingly and sweetly, but when he said, "What are you doing in this moment here," I'd be honest and say, "I have no idea." He would say, "Well, think about it this way." He wouldn't tell me *how* to do it; he would just give me the information I needed to do it myself. On a purely technical indication, he's fast. We were not running over time. Jensen knew exactly what he wanted and he knew how to get it. When people had a different idea, he listened and without any ego involved, would say, "Yes, that's better" or "No, here's what I want done."



> "I was actually quite shocked when season six came around and Dean was going to be living with me and Ben. I thought, 'Wow, that's intense.' I was a bit apprehensive."

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

Words by: Nicholas Knight

There have been many women in Dean Winchester's life, but Lisa Braeden is the only one he ever settled down with. We spoke to actress Cindy Sampson about Lisa and Dean's relationship, fan reactions, playing a demon, and how she felt about Dean's tragic decision to erase himself from Lisa's memories for her own good...

After Lisa Braeden's first appearance in *The Kids Are Alright*, it seemed like the door had been left open for Dean to revisit that relationship. And after Lisa appeared in one of Dean's dreams in *Dream A Little Dream Of Me*, actress Cindy Sampson says that in the back of her mind she always thought her character would come back and tie up that loose end someday, somehow. "That being said, I was actually quite shocked when season six came around [and] Dean was going to be living with me and Ben," Sampson says. "I thought, 'Wow, that's intense.' I was a bit apprehensive because I thought, 'Oh, that really changes the dynamic of the show.'" Sampson's happy with the way the season played out though, and while there aren't necessarily any loose ends, she's once again hopeful that the writers will find a reason to bring her back in the future...

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: Given how some fans felt about Lisa, were you nervous about going to your first *Supernatural* convention, Asylum 6?**

I was really nervous, but it turned out to be the greatest weekend ever. I think in my whole life, it was the first time I realized I had fans. I think I was more excited at Asylum than the fans were themselves! I had a great reception, and I signed tons of autographs. And the fact that there were a lot of girls there who were excited that I was there really gave me some confidence.

The funny thing about the convention was no one had seen my last episode yet, so I was thinking, "Oh, they're going to love me when they see I become a demon, because that's so cool."

With that on your mind, were you afraid you might accidentally slip up and say something "spoilery"?

I was really afraid before the convention, but it was a lot easier than I thought it was going to be. There was so much else to talk about. But I really wanted to tell! I was so excited when I found out [Lisa would be possessed] because I'd wanted to be a demon on this show since it began. I just really wanted to be evil, so at the con I wanted to scream at the top of my lungs, "I get to be a demon!" But I think it was a good surprise. *Let It Bleed* was a kick-ass episode.

Before we talk more about that episode, let's jump back to the beginning of season six. For instance, in *Exile on Main Street*, what did you think of the scene where you were burning on the ceiling?

First of all, I thought it was neat being a part of that small group of women [with Samantha Smith as Mary, and Adrianne Palicki as Jessica] that have been burned on the ceiling in *Supernatural*, so I felt special. But it's just a really cool trick

Let it Bleed

Cont.

how they do it, how they set it all up. I thought it was really awesome.

With the appearance of the Djinn in Lisa's house, did you think maybe you'd get to do some monster slaying, too? Or maybe hop in the Impala and go on a family vacation, monster-hunter style?

I totally wanted to kick some ass! I don't know how they would have written that into the show but I'm sure everyone would have hated it! [laughs] But yeah, of course, being a hunter would have been the coolest thing ever.

Aside from getting to act on the show, as a fan, what's the coolest thing about *Supernatural*?

I like the history. Season one was my favorite because it really dealt with the folklore, actual history where you could look up these things, these monsters that existed, and it's really interesting stuff. I actually research it a lot in my spare time because I think the whole subject of the supernatural is really interesting. There's gotta be more to the world than just what we're seeing, right?

The last time we spoke you said that when you were a kid you believed unicorns and fairies were real, so do you still believe that as an adult? If so, do you think they're anything like how they were portrayed in *Clap Your Hands if You Believe*?

I still believe. I have a friend named Kate who is an intuitive and she and I talked about *Supernatural*, and she said someone on the show knows things, that someone on the show is a psychic, because they get it so bang-on. And she has problems with [other shows] that are incorrect. She's like, "Someone writing or overseeing *Supernatural* knows this stuff inside out, and it's eerie how bang-on they get it." And I would have to agree.

> **"I was so excited when I found out Lisa would be possessed, because I'd wanted to be a demon on this show since it began. I just really wanted to be evil."**

You're obviously a fan of the supernatural, so what are your favorite horror movies?

I'm a fan of all horror movies. It's weird because I get genuinely scared and have to watch *Care Bears* after them, but I love horror movies! I like scary, spooky, supernatural... all of it.

Was it spooky that you ended up playing a character with your own name, Cindy, on *Being Human*, a show written and

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executive produced by former *Supernatural* writer Jeremy Carver?

That was a complete coincidence. I'd watched the BBC's [original version of] *Being Human* and when they said, "We have this part [in the US version]" I said, "I want that part really bad!" I wasn't shooting *Supernatural* at the time, so I got it, but it was just a random coincidence that Jeremy Carver was one of the writers on that. A nice, cool coincidence, though.

What's it like "behind the scenes" on *Supernatural*?

The thing is I often shoot and then leave, so I'm not there for all the good stories, but we sure do have a fun time. The crew plays soccer at lunch hour and one day, one of our cameramen's fingers got broken. That was pretty interesting, because he had to get a steel rod put in his finger. Then soccer got banned at lunch hour...

Were you playing soccer with them?

No, I didn't. I get sweaty! I get really sweaty! No soccer at work for me! Do you know how long it would take to get my hair fixed afterward?

Point taken. How is it working with the *Supernatural* crew?

The crew is the greatest crew I've ever worked with. I love working on the show; they're just so much fun. I've never laughed more doing something serious. There are serious supernatural elements, everything there is dark, and yet we spend most of our time laughing.

Did the producers give you any indication of whether you'll be back? Like, maybe your memories of Dean will slowly come back the way Sam was getting flashes of Hell through his soul wall, or maybe some villain will go after you to get to Dean. Heck, maybe even Crowley will grab you again since it's not like *he's* forgotten about you...

I never believe anything until it actually happens. I really think the way they ended this – erasing Lisa and Ben's memories – was brilliant. But I can't say either way, because I really don't know.

It's funny, though, because I opened a Twitter account after the Asylum convention and fans have been asking me about that, too. They keep writing me things like, "I'm writing Eric Kripke because I have this idea..." and they're all telling me little loopholes and reasons why I could come back and all these things. It's so awesome.

> **"I love working on the show; they're just so much fun. I've never laughed more doing something serious. There are serious supernatural elements, everything there is dark, and yet we spend most of our time laughing."**

By the same token, do you still think there's a chance Dean could come back to you to settle down for good in the series' finale (whenever that is)?

Maybe, that might be interesting. It makes me sad to think that it will end [for good between them], but everything ends I guess. I'm sure something along those lines could happen. Did you see him cry? Dean cried over me, okay? [*laughs*] I have faith I'll be back for some reason at some point.

WAR OF THE SON

In season six we found out that Ben Braeden is definitely not Dean Winchester's son, but Dean nonetheless treated Ben like his own. Because of that, he wanted to keep Ben as far away from hunting as possible. And, aside from being in the Djinn's line of fire and getting kidnapped by demons, Dean succeeded. But since father knows best, Dean decided to wipe Ben's memories of monsters... and of Dean himself. We spoke with actor Nicholas Elia about his character's journey...

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: You first played Ben Braeden back in season three's *The Kids Are Alright*. Did you change anything about the way you portrayed the character when you returned in season six?**

Nicholas Elia: Ben was a few years older, so I did try to make him more my age, more of a teenager. But otherwise, not that much – he's still the same guy.

Of course, along with his literal growth, the character's role also grew from a one-time guest to a full-season recurring star, so were there any particular challenges to playing Ben?

The monologue when I talked to Dean in *Mannequin 3: The Reckoning* was challenging, because I was pretty much telling him that he was being a bad father-figure for me. It was tricky bringing emotion to that scene, but I think I did pretty well. And it was actually a really fun scene to do because of just how much emotional depth was in it.

Are there any other scenes that you had a lot of fun with?

Yeah, when I got to fire the gun in *Let It Bleed*, because it was so much fun to be able to learn how to use [a prop] gun and stuff.

Dean had rightfully been keeping Ben away from guns, but given Dean's history with monsters it was inevitable Ben would have to defend himself sooner or later. Before the whole mind-wipe, had you hoped Ben would get to do some monster hunting?

Yeah, I did, actually. I always thought that would be pretty cool to do.

Or did you maybe hope Ben would get turned into a monster? You played a Changeling in your first episode, but technically Ben was just replaced by a monster, so would you have liked it if he'd been possessed by a demon or maybe turned into a vampire (by Dean no less)?

Yeah, that would be pretty cool, too. It's usually pretty fun to play the bad guy!

Unfortunately for you, it was Cindy Sampson who got to play a demon, and to make sure that never happened again, Dean had Castiel wipe Lisa's and Ben's memories. What do you think of the way Ben's storyline was wrapped up?

I think for Dean it was the right decision to make, because he didn't want to leave Ben or Lisa in danger. And it's also good because what Ben saw in that episode [would've traumatized him for life]...

Even though Ben's forgotten about Dean, are you still hoping you'll get to return to *Supernatural* in the future?

Yeah, of course I would! It's always so much fun being on that set. All the episodes were a lot of fun to work on, and I was sad to leave.

Words by: Nicholas Knight

Ben gets threatened by the demon-possessed Lisa in *Let It Bleed*